National Parks • Groundhogs • Coal and Tobacco Alternatives • The WVEC

NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

THE CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES, EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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Appalachia and the Environment

Plus: Fiction, Poetry, and Reviews

The Woods

I breathe through the woods almost silent
from my Indian blood.
A spot suddenly stops me.
Not a leaf shines different or even special,
but here, a tingle goes up my back.
I am almost frightened by my own stillness.
It is not a feeling that I belong or don't belong.
It is an assurance that I am alive
wearing all of the woods like a skin.
I am no more aware of one part than another.
From this spot, I am in the center of the world,
and I stand for a long time breathing
to listen and look the woods in and out
before stepping further.

There is so much noise in the woods that there is none.

I like the rooms of woods,
slipping up a bank under pines or shouldering a laurel thicket.
I like the way trees place themselves in the best way possible,
the staged azaleas with their color
holding out their arms to be in front
even in the middle of the forest,
ladyslippers so blatant in shape that I am embarrassed.
At times, a wine bottle waits as all remembrance,
its green more jagged and crystalline
than the rocks securing it in the stream.
The hemlock that bends over the road
and twists slow to its fullness
is a fertility rite that the air bites into.

In the woods,
I am truly here and nowhere else.
I am as happy as when I am with you and no one else.
You can see the braille of truth
on the underside of chipped off bark.

When I press my body to a tree,
it is my prayer to the earth that we are one.

A doe and her fawn step from the woods
into the field's less stiff air
and our hearts leap at each other.
In these woods,
there are things having lives.

Jack, a quarterback on the varsity team,
said he was going to take me up in the woods.
Oh no, you're not, I said.
I was twelve with blonde hair nearly to my knees,
that swayed like a lizard's tail when I ran,
and I could run fast.
He tied my arms to the porch swing,
but when he went inside,
I loosened the ropes thinking with heartbeats in my ears,
Oh no, you're not.
When my friends played basketball with Jack,
he spit thickly and said words that made us brace.
I was never safe if he saw me walking alone.
Many times, Reba's grandfather in a nearby house
would hit him away with a broom as I outran Jack to the porch.
Jack's father led singing in church.
His mother taught Sunday School class,
of black and white polka dot dress.
With Jack's slam back through the screen door,
I was running aslant the yard
where a basketball lay.
I threw it hard into his stomach.
He folded and fell.
I flew free and ran back for the rope.
I can tie better than you,
I tied his feet and hands together.
His parents were angry
when they came home from work, hours later,
and found him still tied on the ground.

At a recent decoration at Silver Chapel Church,
Jack stood with his new second wife and their toddler
and I stood speechless when they said hello.

continued on inside back cover

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NOW & THEN
THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

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"The immense scale of all this scenery up here causes you to want to look at it by the hour in silence."
— D.R. Beeson from his journal, In the Spirit of Adventure *(1994)*

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I was surprised by what I learned while editing this issue.

First of all, I had not realized that the membership of national environmental groups has declined so precipitously in the past few years, in some cases as much as 20 or 30 percent. Some speculate that such groups are suffering from "the Gore effect," from the perception on the part of their members that with a relatively pro-environment administration in office, it was time to turn their attention to other issues.

Of course, even as I write, the "Gingrich effect" could well be neutralizing the "Gore effect." But what is certain — and what is demonstrated by our three page listing of Appalachian environmental organizations — is that there are many, many groups in this region dealing with environmental issues, from fighting toxic waste incinerators to forging links to other mountain communities throughout the world in an effort to find sustainable solutions to common problems. The fact that there are so many different environmental groups at work in Appalachian communities today makes Mary J. Wimmer's account of the West Virginia Environmental Council's early days important reading. All these groups, from single-issue local groups to Sierra Club chapters, need to know what the other ones are doing, and this statewide umbrella organization performs that networking function.

I expected to receive stories about environmentalists doing battle against ineffective government and greedy, insensitive industries. I am certain that there are still plenty of those stories to tell, but I didn't get any of them. Early in December, I spoke to Don Barger, the current southeastern regional director for the National Parks and Conservation Association. What we need now, he asserts, is for people who used to end up on opposite sides of law suits and picket lines to find ways to work together.

Sometime later, I received Jill Oxendine's interview with Ed E. Williams III, a Johnson City attorney who often represents industry in environmental suits. But Williams too made a case for environmentalists and industry becoming partners. This cooperative approach will be tricky since liberal and conservative environmentalists often have values and priorities that aren't congruent. But it will be interesting to follow new initiatives such as the Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere, a broad-based consortium affiliated with UNESCO, to see what happens.

What I hope you'll hear throughout *Now & Then* are the distinctive voices of individuals, from our essayists, our poets, our writers of fiction and nonfiction. At a reception last fall, writer John Bowers told me that what he appreciated most about this magazine was that you could still hear each writer's unique voice. His remark crystallized for me the core of what I've inherited from Pat Arnow.

Pat, as most of you already know, left for Durham, N.C., last summer to become editor of *Southern Exposure*. As her successor, I've discovered over the past few months the ways in which she has made my job more difficult and the ways in which she has made it painless. She has made the task easy because during her eight years as editor, she established *Now & Then* so firmly that it is not difficult to attract well-written and stimulating work. She has made the job more difficult because she set such high editorial standards.

With this issue, we will also be saying another farewell, this time to our poetry editor, Jo Carson. Jo has not only spent many long hours reading each and every poetry submission, she has also frequently contributed pieces and even more frequently offered advice. She will still be supplying us with essays from time to time. We appreciate all of her past work and look forward to hearing from her before too long.

Nature abhors a vacuum, and so do we. Send us your letters. We would like to start publishing Letters to the Editor in *Now & Then's* summer issue. So if you have something to say about anything you've read here, put your thoughts down on paper and send it to: Editor/*Now & Then*, Box 70556, ETSU, Johnson City TN 37614-0556. We reserve the right to edit.

Linda Parsons will be our new poetry editor. If her name seems familiar, it is because she won both first prize and an honorable mention in last year's *Now & Then* Appalachian Poetry Contest. A playwright and a poet, she has published her poetry in publications such as the *Iowa Review* and *Appalachian Heritage*. Linda works as an editor and technical writer at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Please send your poetry submissions directly to Linda Parsons at 2909 Fountain Park Blvd., Knoxville TN 37917.

We will also have, for the first time, the services of a book review editor. Sandy Ballard is currently an assistant professor of English at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn. Motivated by her deep interest in Appalachia, she is currently winding up a stint as the highly competent editor of *Appalink: The Newsletter of the Appalachian Studies Association* and as the Association's secretary. Again, send book reviews to Sandy Ballard at the Department of English, Carson-Newman College, Box 2059, Jefferson City TN 37760.

And finally, a few words about myself: I am assistant director of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University, where I have worked since 1987. Almost from the beginning, I've contributed to *Now & Then,* as time allowed. I have just finished co-editing a volume with Susan Eike Spalding on vernacular dance recently published by Greenwood Press, *Communities in Motion.* The book project has made the prospect of getting a publication out from start to finish in less than five years enormously attractive.

My special thanks to assistant editor Nancy Fischman for the help (and all the reassurance) she has offered as I worked on this first issue. We promise to continue to hear, to respect, and to do our best to preserve all of the many distinctive voices from the Southern Appalachian mountains.

— Jane Harris Woodside, editor

An Interview with NPCA's Don Barger

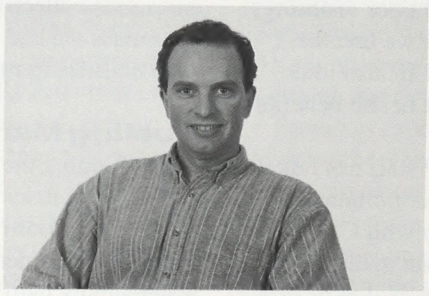
Protecting Appalachia's National Parks

by Jane Harris Woodside

A native son goes national with lessons learned from working with Appalachian grass-roots organizations.

With over 450,000 members, the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA) is one of the largest, yet at the same time one of the least well-known, of all the national environmental organizations. "We work the national parks," explains the organization's new southeast regional director, Don Barger. "The NPCA has stayed very focused."

But concentrating on national parks is not as simple as it sounds. "You can't draw a dotted line on the landscape around a national park and just protect that little piece. You have to look at the larger picture."



National Parks and Conservation Assoc.

Don Barger

Using national parks to draw people into looking at the larger picture — and to search for new solutions to long-standing environmental questions — lies at the heart of much of what Barger does as the NPCA's first southeast regional director. "My job is to take people wherever they are and say, 'This is how environmental issues affect something you really care about.'"

Currently based in Washington, D.C., the association was founded in 1919, just three years after the establishment of the National Park Service (NPS), by its first director Stephen Mather. Its purpose is to advocate for the park system and to guard against its commercialization and exploitation.

In the early 1990s, just when many believed that with Clinton's election, the environmental movement was poised to exert unprecedented influence, most large national organizations were startled by substantial drops in membership, as much as 20 or 30 percent in some cases. Possible explanations ranged from the "Gore effect," the feeling on the part of many that the environment was being looked after by an environmentalist vice president, to members' impatience with some environmental organizations' frequent requests for money.

Whatever the reasons, NPCA proved to be an exception. From 1990 to 1994, membership more than doubled, from just over 200,000 to around 450,000 members. Barger believes that NPCA flourished precisely because of its concentration on national parks. "The appeal of the national parks cuts across political boundaries. A lot of people who would never consider themselves environmentalists have a real gut level love for national parks," he notes.

Barger became the NPCA's first southeast regional director in 1992. After having worked as a community organizer for Save Our Cumberland Mountains, a network of community citizens' organizations currently operating on Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau and in nearby areas, Barger took a job in 1990 with the Environmental Policy Institute in Washington, D.C., as the director of the Citizen Mining Project.

However, he never intended to stay in Washington. "I wanted to get whatever experience and credentials were necessary to get a job back in the real world," explains Barger, who was born in Charleston, W. Va. and spent most of his childhood in Red Bank, Tenn., near Chattanooga. "This is where I'm from, and this is where I feel comfortable as a person."

Barger has come back home, more or less, to Norris, Tenn., the community near Knoxville where he maintains an office in his modest, 1950s-vintage ranch house. Finding him in his office, however, can be difficult. His jurisdiction includes more than 60 park units, including the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Great Smoky Mountains NP), along with the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Everglades, and numerous smaller parks, battlefields, historic sites, and national monuments. His territory stretches south from Arkansas, Kentucky, and southern West Virginia, down to Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, and west to Louisiana.

An Early Warning System

Air pollution is a good example of an environmental problem that refuses to be contained by those dotted-line park boundaries. Acid deposition, ground-level ozone, and visibility impairment are the three major air pollution problems at the Great Smoky Mountains NP.

To focus on the visibility issue: Back in the early 1950s visibility in the park was almost on a par with that in the western United States, points out Thomas Cahill, a researcher at the University of California-Davis in a recent *New York Times* article. Since 1948, average summertime visibility in the Smokies has deteriorated from about 65 miles to under 12 miles. A 10-year study conducted by Cahill and his colleague Robert Eldred for the federal government and released last year found a 39 percent increase in haze-producing sulfate concentrations in the Smokies, the worst of the 12 parks studied across the nation.

"Well, as some people remind me, we're dealing with mountains that are called the Great *Smoky* Mountains. 'Why do you think they call them the Smokies?' I don't know how many times I've heard that," sighs Barger. The Smokies were actually named after the mist-like clouds that rise up after a rain storm, not for the uniform white haze that today often shrouds the mountains and the region.

Data collected at the park has established that fine particulate matter, mainly sulfates, is responsible for 70 to 85 percent of the impaired visibility. The sulfates which find their way to the Smokies are formed from the sulfur dioxide gas released into the

air from fossil fuel-fired plants and other industrial sources in the eastern U.S., especially in the Ohio and Tennessee River Valleys. When high sulfate levels meet up with high humidity, especially during the summer months, the sulfate particles absorb water to form the haze that washes out colors and obscures views. In addition, the EPA is presently investigating possible health effects of fine particulate matter.

Some of the haze does occur naturally, Barger concedes. "But if you go to the Smokies in the winter, right after a cold front has taken all of the stagnant air and just blown it out, then you see what's natural. There's a beautiful, fine blue haze that hugs the ridges. However, if you look back over the Tennessee Valley, you can see a very discernible, yellowish brown line that is definitely not natural.

"For me, the parks are very much in the canary-in-the-coal-mine role," he continues. "We are talking about poor visibility, but at the same time, we're talking about the air we breathe. I am not only interested in protecting parks, but I'm also interested in dealing with regional air quality for the health benefits that would result."

The reason that Great Smoky Mountains NP staff can talk so knowledgeably about levels of sulfates and other pollutants such as ozone and how they affect the park has to do with a 1977 amendment to the Clean Air Act. This legislation mandated that air quality in national parks, including visibility, had to be protected; it specifically stipulated that "Class I" areas, including parks with areas of over 6,000 acres, receive the highest degree of protection. Great Smoky Mountains NP was among the nearly 200 areas that received the Class I designation.

Under the 1977 Clean Air Act, federal land managers responsible for these Class I areas are obligated to determine whether emissions from proposed new pollution sources within 120 miles will adversely affect the park before construction permits are issued. In order to be able to make that determination, the Smokies established an air quality monitoring and research program in 1980 to determine what pollutants were in the air, where they were coming from, and what their effects have been on park resources.

Once the park began to document its air pollution problems, the search for solutions began. One result was the 1992 Forum on Air Quality Management for Class I areas in the Southern Appalachians conference held in Gatlinburg, Tenn., and sponsored with the NPS's support by the Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB) program, part of an international environmental effort under the auspices of UNESCO. Over 100 representatives from state and federal governments, industry, universities, and environmental groups came together to begin crafting a comprehensive regional strategy to address air pollution problems.

Out of this conference, the Southern Appalachian Mountain Initiative (SAMI) was born. Currently being organized by eight Appalachian states, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the NPS, and the Forest Service, SAMI will attempt to establish the necessary forums and processes to foster a cooperative approach to air pollution problems in the Southern Appalachians.

"It would be hard to overestimate the value of having a Class I area in our neck of the woods," asserts Barger. "All of this enormous collective effort around SAMI would not be happening unless we had the park here and the park had taken its responsibilities to monitor air quality seriously."

Dueling Mandates

But finding the type of cooperative effort between federal and state agencies represented by SAMI can be difficult. In 1992, the Catoosa Water District applied to a federal agency, the Rural Development Administration, for a loan to help finance a water supply dam, treatment plant, and development of a 100-acre lake on Clear Creek, about 20 miles upstream from the protected part of the Obed River system. It is estimated that if built, the dam will divert 1.5 million gallons per day from the Obed water system. The Catoosa Water District is charged with supplying drinking water to the northwestern portion of rural Cumberland County in Tennessee.

With its headwaters on the Cumberland Plateau, the Obed eventually flows into the Tennessee River; portions of the Obed, along with segments of several of its tributaries, have been a Federal Wild and Scenic River protected area administered by the NPS since 1976. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 protected certain U.S. rivers by limiting development, including the construction of federal dams, along their banks in order to preserve these waterways as recreational resources. Although the proposed dam was not on a portion of Clear Creek included in the protected area, Barger reasons that "a watershed is a watershed. If you take 1.5 million gallons per day out of the Obed watershed, it doesn't matter whether you take it out right next to

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Two images of Gregory Bald in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park: (left) Visibility is 12 miles, the current summer average; and (right) an example of a good day with an estimated visibility of 65 miles.

SOCM: Asking the Right Questions

Educated as an architect at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, Don Barger worked for seven years as a community organizer for Save Our Cumberland Mountains (SOCM). Because SOCM does deal at times with environmental issues, it is often misidentified as an environmental organization. It is not. Formed in 1972, it is in fact a network of community chapters. Though initially it concentrated on strip mining issues, over the years SOCM's focus has broadened so that today, it helps communities — mostly located on or near Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau — help themselves in dealing with problems ranging from obtaining better roads to attracting high-paying, nonpolluting industries.

I have an amazing amount of respect for SOCM. It truly is a citizen-run organization. The board, which is completely made up of volunteer citizens from the region, really does make all the decisions. At board meetings, the staff sits at a circular table over in the corner and speaks when spoken to. You deal with whatever the community determined was the issue.

Just about everything I do today derives from my years at SOCM: connecting people with people, connecting people with resources, doing problem solving. Probably one of the most important lessons of SOCM was that if you do something *for* people, you create a mystique, you always leave them with the belief that you know how to do something, and they don't. Even if you just sit there with them while *they* write the letter, put the stamp on it and send it, then the reply comes back to *them* in the mail. It makes a quantum difference. Community people come away from that experience knowing, "*I* did that. I can do that."

When I was working with SOCM, I did a lot of just sitting on the porch and talking. Most city-based organizing models have this rap: You go in and try to keep it under 45 minutes. Then you say "Thanks," and move onto the next house. It simply doesn't work that way here.

You go sit on the porch, and you stay half a day. When somebody wants to feed you, you let them feed you. In this region, the best way to gain someone's trust is not to do something for them, but to let them do something for you. When you've accepted someone's hospitality, it's almost like you become part of their family.

I learned from SOCM that it is much more important to have the right question than the right answer. In meetings, I would be a resource person. Before a chapter meeting, I'd meet with the community chairperson and talk about the agenda. "O.K., this item's probably going to be controversial, and there's going to be a lot of discussion; this one's going to go real quick." How do you get consensus in a group, how do you do decision making, how do you get Fred to shut up so you can do decision making — just basic facilitation skills. If I felt like people were headed for a familiar pitfall, I would not say, "Well, you're wrong." I would say, "I'm aware of this other community over here that's been through the same thing. Do you think it would be a good idea to find out what they know?"

From my experience, rural people in this area are much, much more tolerant of outside intrusions into their lives than people elsewhere. They all believe that somebody ought to be able to do on their own land whatever they think is proper. Most people are perfectly content to let anybody do anything anywhere, if the effects of what they did stopped at the property line. If you weren't disrupting their water system, if you weren't churning up dust on all their unpaved roads, dust that's going to cover their gardens and their front porches and their lives, they don't oppose things.

A lot of rural people are so polite that they will allow you to push and push and push, but they all have a line somewhere. If you go over that line, watch out. They've just decided, "I have to take action now. This person can't push me any farther." What I saw trigger that reaction more than anything else was a sense that their community was being disrupted — not community in a physical sense but as a sense of place and belonging.

I've been gone from SOCM for three years now, and already it's a different organization. It's not static at all. It moves with the issues and with the people who are involved in it. All in all, it's a very good reflection of what people in the mountains are about.

the park or 20 miles upstream. That's 1.5 million gallons less water going through that system each day."

Once an NPCA member alerted the Association about the dam project, the Association and other environmentalists went into action. They notified their members about the threat to the Obed and organized a letter-writing campaign. Particularly effective was a letter sent to Leon Panetta, then Office of Management and Budget director. Drafted with Barger's assistance and co-signed by the conservative National Taxpayers Union and the environmentalist organization, Friends of the Earth, the letter spelled why they believed the project would seriously damage natural resources while wasting taxpayers' money. All these efforts did not manage to get the project scratched, but the NPCA and the Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning pressured the dam proponents to develop a full-scale environmental impact statement which would consider other alternatives. That environmental impact statement is currently being done.

The dam project loan request was submitted by a local water district with the help of the Tennessee State Planning Office to the Rural Development Administration (RDA); the RDA and the Farmers Home Administration shared some administrative staff. The RDA and Farmers Home Administration have vanished in a recent governmental reorganization and been replaced by the Rural, Economic, and Community Development service (RECD). Then there is the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, which oversees the nearby Catoosa Wildlife Refuge, and the NPS, of course, with its responsibility for the Obed Wild and Scenic River area itself. The EPA has weighed in with the opinion that planners must do a full-scale environmental impact statement; all of the land involved is included in a watershed under the jurisdiction of the Tennessee Valley Authority which has been given the task of developing the environmental impact statement.

"There are nine different governmental agencies involved,

and we're talking about a 12-square-mile area on the Cumberland Plateau," says Barger. Each of these government agencies has its own mandate, and often those mandates are at odds. The water district and the RECD are charged with fostering economic development in rural areas by increasing water supplies. Even though Barger believes that the main beneficiary of this particular project would be a Florida-based developer, he concedes that up on the Cumberland Plateau, adequate water supplies are hard to come by since rainfall tends to drain rapidly down off the plateau. "After all the years I worked for SOCM, I know the problems. Those folks have two choices: build reservoirs or go thirsty and stop all development." On the other hand, the NPS is charged with seeing that the river does not have its scenic and recreational character "unreasonably diminished."

Barger points out, "If you have a mandate as a federal agency and by implementing that mandate you violate another federal agency's mandate, how is that resolved? At this point, it's not. And that's central to the problem."

Old Battles, New Solutions?

Recently, the Blue Ridge Parkway found itself taken aback by a Roanoke (Va.) County planning commission decision. Once again, the NPS and the NPCA found themselves having to react to a problem-in-progress.

Begun in 1935 and designed both to run along mountain ridges and to lead past valley farms and fields, the Blue Ridge Parkway extends from Waynesboro, Va., in the north to Cherokee, N.C., in the south. The crux of the problem of preserving this particular park, says Barger, is that "you have a resource that is 469 miles long and a few hundred feet wide. If someone were to ask you what's special about this place, easily 90 percent of what you'd describe would be outside the park boundaries. It's mainly the views, the vistas."

When in December 1992 the county planning commission recommended a change in zoning from agricultural to residential for several hundred acres bordering the Parkway just south of the city of Roanoke, it threatened one such treasured view. The land in question, known locally as the "bowl and knoll," lies in a section of Parkway that dips down and travels through the relatively urbanized area around Roanoke. An exception is a gentle sweep of pasture which rises up to the forested mountains on both sides.

After the Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway challenged the decision and developers began filing lawsuits, the Roanoke County Commission tried to strike a compromise by re-zoning the area to allow a lower density of houses than the developers' application had requested. Still, the compromise would have resulted in houses appearing in the Parkway's viewshed. Since then, the Parkway has been having ongoing conversations with two of the major developers, promising discussions which might lead to a solution satisfactory to both sides.

Whatever the outcome of those discussions, the bowl-and-knoll controversy called attention to the fact that new approaches to land management issues were badly needed. In the past, says Barger, "everyone would fight their particular position, beat their governmental representatives over the head, and see who won. And that would be the fate of that piece of property."

This adversarial approach is still necessary in some instances, he says. But the disadvantage is that "you can fight brush fires along the Blue Ridge Parkway forever. As soon as you put that one out, you've got three others burning somewhere, and you're exhausted."

As in the case of air quality, the Parkway battle is in danger of being lost by increments. "Nobody's coming in and putting in Disneyland. It's a house here, a house there." The old approaches tend to lead to "the really sort of mushy compromises that please absolutely no one. What we end up with is mediocrity. We don't end up with things that are actually planned ahead. How do we begin to change what we're doing?"

A cooperative approach similar to SAMI and organized in 1993, the Coalition for the Blue Ridge Parkway is one answer to Barger's question. Barger is among the 36 representatives from the Parkway, other government agencies, conservation groups, tourism councils, universities, and developers belonging to the group. Barger also serves on the executive committee. Currently headed by ex-congressmen Jamie Clark of North Carolina and Jim Olin of Virginia, the Coalition's mission is to conserve the Parkway's "physical, cultural, and scenic integrity" through a "community driven process that accommodates growth in a changing environment."

Figuring out how to accomplish that goal is going to be a long process, says Barger. "We're going to be inventing things as we go. But it's obvious that the way to start is to get a broad base of people together ahead of time and ask the right questions," notes the ex-SOCM community organizer. "A lot of coalitions are springing up, efforts that are pulling together traditional adversaries, making them sit around a table and figure out ways they can all balance out their views.

"There's not going to be one solution. We are not putting together a handbook for communities along the Parkway: *this* is how you protect the Parkway. We are putting together a catalogue: here are a lot of different ways the land can be protected. Pull out the ideas that apply to you. We want to be a resource to help you in any way we can. You tell us."

The potential pay-off to this more cooperative approach, Barger believes, is that "you end up with a Parkway. A true win/win situation is not a compromise. It's an agreement where development and the protection of resources can coexist."

A New Way of Doing Business?

But there are still plenty of chances for private and public sectors to land on opposite sides of an issue or for governmental agencies to find themselves working at cross purposes with each other. Occasionally government teams, such as Gore's Interagency Task Force on Ecosystem Management, try to come up with ways to improve the system. It's Barger's impression that "their idea of ecosystem management is that you just redraw the dotted lines along ecosystems instead of the way they're drawn now." He doesn't subscribe to that view and cites the Obed as supporting evidence. "Nobody's going to draw a 12-square-mile dotted line around the upper end of the Obed watershed. It's a problem-driven situation. Until a dam is proposed there, that ecosystem doesn't become a consideration."

The problem, he says, has to do with the way that agencies do business. The solution lies in greater communication and

Please see **Barger** *on page 29.*

A Hiker's Diary Gives a Glimpse into Changes in the Smoky Mountains

Before the Blight, Boars, and Acid Rain

by Charles Maynard

It almost goes without saying that over the last 80 years, humankind has experienced many changes, all sorts of changes — social, economic, even geographic. Yet people often assume that the Great Smoky Mountains have managed to remain inviolate in the midst of all these upheavals. The hiking journals of D. R. Beeson point out a different truth.

Born in Western Pennsylvania, not far from the West Virginia line, Donald Richard Beeson, Sr. was an architect who eventually settled in East Tennessee's Johnson City after having worked as a draftsman for various coal and steel companies as well as for the Clinchfield Railroad. He and his hiking partner, C. Hodge Mathes, an English professor and dean at what was then the East Tennessee State Normal School, left their homes to roam through the Southern Appalachians on four amazing hikes from 1913 to 1915.

In The Spirit of Adventure is Beeson's record of one such hike made through the Great Smoky Mountains in 1914. This volume has recently been published by Panther Press in collaboration with the Archives of Appalachia, a division of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University. The original journal, currently housed in the center's Archives of Appalachia, was fully illustrated with Beeson's own photographs, made on 5" x 7" negatives taken with a bulky camera mounted on a wooden tripod.

Walking 113 miles through "unknown and untrod" territory, Beeson and Mathes traveled through old growth forests with giant chestnut and spruce-fir. Their trek along the crest of the Great Smokies was unmarked and offered unparalleled views of North Carolina and Tennessee.

In the eight days of their trip, they encountered the tracks of bear (but no bear) and very few people. They often lost their way due to poor maps and dense undergrowth. After a "long slide" down the eastern slopes of Mt. Guyot, they found a bed and some much needed food in a logging camp at Crestmont on Big Creek.

The Great Smoky Mountains of the 1990s are very different from those through which Beeson and Mathes passed in 1914. The chestnut trees fell to a blight in the 1930s. A few chestnuts still sprout from the root stock of the ancient forest, but blight usually kills them before maturity.

The spruce-fir forest which greens the heights of the Smokies is dying under the attack of the balsam wooly adelgid. The adelgids have killed the large trees whose weakened condition is caused by acid rain. The rain's pH factor in the Smokies is more than seven times that of normal rainfall.

In addition to acid rain, the Smokies have become "smokier." Smog from nearby cities, distant manufacturers, and numerous automobiles settles over the mountains, particularly in the summer months. The views which Beeson and Mathes enjoyed are now available only on the clearest of days after a weather front has "cleaned" the air.

Wild boar, a species unknown in the Eastern mountains in 1914, now inhabit all areas of the Smokies. Their destruction of plant life is well-documented. Their ancestors were Russian boar brought to the area for game hunting in an enclosed area. Eventually the area fell into disrepair, and the boar escaped to proliferate throughout the Southern mountains.

In August of 1994, on the eightieth anniversary of Beeson and Mathes' expedition, I and a friend went on an overnight hike to an Appalachian Trail shelter at Spence Field, located right on the North Carolina-Tennessee line. That night, after a wonderful day of hiking, I watched the sun set in a glorious blaze of color. For a few moments, the clear air and coming darkness allowed us a view similar to the one that greeted Don Beeson's and C. Hodge Mathes' eyes back in 1914. Then the lights of the cities of the Tennessee Valley slowly blinked on to compete with the light above.

At our feet spread a scene of the power of humanity and electricity. We could see the city lights from Maryville all the way to Greeneville, a distance of about 70 miles. It was a visible example of the great press of people surrounding the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The brilliant human galaxies in the valley below were in stark contrast to the dimmer heavenly ones.

Change can be both good and bad. Certainly, part of the fascination of Beeson's journal is that it allows us in the 1990s to see the changes which have occurred. The establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park 20 years after Beeson's and Mathes' walk was an attempt "to preserve and protect" the Smokies, in the words of the National Park Service's mandate. Today's struggle is to balance the press of humanity with the needs of the Great Smoky Mountains ecosystem so that future generations might be able to enjoy the wonders of the Smokies, the wonders Beeson and Mathes experienced so long ago.

Charles Maynard is the Executive Director of the Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

In the Spirit of Adventure: A 1914 Smoky Mountain Hiking Journal, *written by D.R. Beeson. Edited by Norma Myers, Ned Irwin, and Charles W. Maynard. Seymour, Tenn.: Panther Press. 1994.*

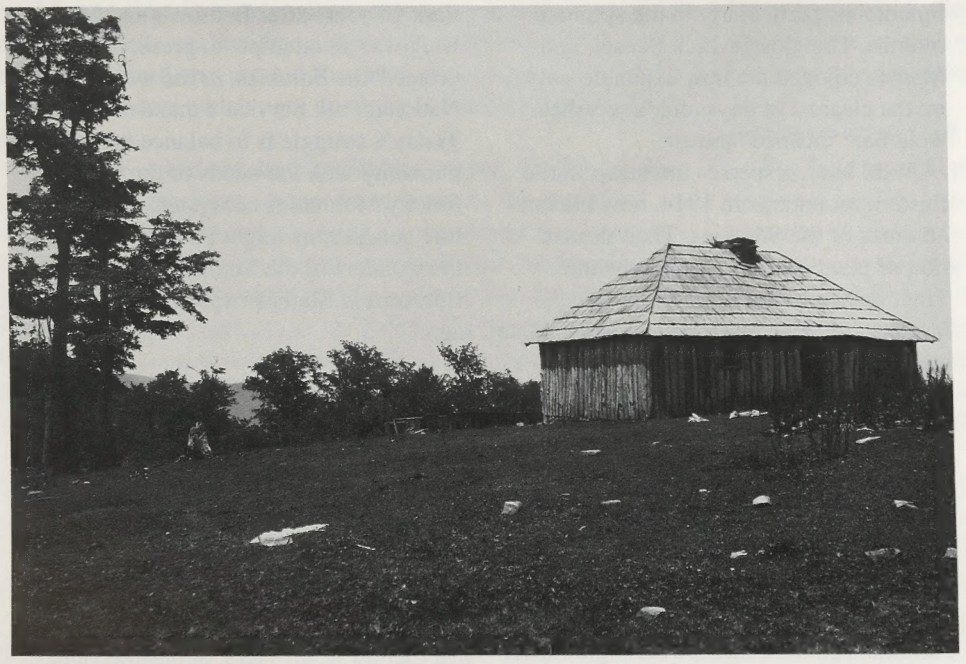
Excerpts from *In The Spirit of Adventure: A 1914 Smoky Mountain Hiking Journal*

written by D.R. Beeson

Early morning — looking southwest from Thunderhead.

"The country for as many miles as you can see is decorated, and in many places, covered with the masses of white fog or cloud that rests all over these mountains in the night time and fills up the valleys. To the south we can see the Nantahala Mountains some forty miles off and to the north, the same distance to the hills about Knoxville, all clear and beautiful."

"I am glad to be able to say at last that we know where we are camping and that, while we were lost for an hour this afternoon, we are now located for sure and have made a fine dry little camp under some beech trees that grow so close together that the moonlight can't get through."



The Hall cabin.

"We left the cabin at 12:50 and, with a good dinner on board, proceeded to celebrate by taking the wrong trail before we had gone more than two blocks on our way. The Government map is so poor as to be almost useless till we get to Clingman's when we get onto another, and, I hope, more accurate sheet of the Geological Survey. It is dated 1910 and should pretty well [be] fitted to the actual geography."

"From the Gap on, we made about a mile an hour and I'm free to confess that I doubt if we could have this last part of our trip at all if the trail had not been broken to some extent quite recently by a party of two, from the footprints, a man and a boy. As it is, we do well to make over the mile an hour as extreme care has to be used on account of the narrowness of the ridge and the uncertainty of the footing. A slip to either side would generally mean serious consequences. The indications are that not very many people have ever made the last half of this trip."

Laurel thicket near Porter's Gap.

"It begins to look like our digestive powers would be undertaxed, however, as it will probably take us till Friday night to reach the Pigeon River Gap which we counted on making by tonight. . . . Our suppers for the past three nights and for the future are consisting of a couple of handfulls of ground parched corn and a pint of water with a chocolate almond bar for dessert. We are both agreed that chocolate is a necessity on such trips as these. The blackberries have been a great help to us as a filler in . . . . They are also a preventive of thirst."

"This stupendous mountain scenery has, nevertheless, repaid us for all our hard tramping and the memory of it will always be a source of pleasure to me. It's a blessing that such a recollection stays with a man so much longer than the memory of rubbed feet and half rations."

Looking east from Siler's Bald over the Great Smoky Mountains.

Putting the Push on Conservation

by Jill Oxendine

You can't get a cleaner, greener environment by battling the bad guys, says a Johnson City attorney.

Every spring, employees of a law firm in Johnson City, Tenn., don jeans and head for the banks of the nearby Watauga River.

No, it isn't a lawyers' day out for the firm of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, and Caldwell. It's an environmental clean-up, part of a local program called Carter County Clean Streams that is sponsored by the Elizabethton, Tenn.-based company, North American Rayon, and by Trout Unlimited.

"Our involvement," explains Ed E. Williams III, the attorney who heads the law firm's Environmental and Labor Practice section, "is that we have actually adopted a stretch of the Watauga River to keep clean."

To those who know Williams, it will come as no surprise that the attorney has made river clean-ups a part of his firm's yearly routine. Something of a visionary, he's been called by a reporter for Northeast Tennessee's *Business Journal* "one of the new players on the national environmental scene" — a man who touts the virtues of a pragmatic strain of conservation.

A one-time Circuit Court judge for Washington, Unicoi, Johnson, and Carter counties, Williams is probably best known for his land preservation efforts. He serves as trustee for the Tennessee chapter of the Nature Conservancy, an organization dedicated to protecting Tennessee's lands and waters.

Until recently, he was also a trustee for the National Park Foundation, a Congressionally chartered entity that raises funds to help support the national parks. Williams is also credited with helping design Tennessee's Scenic Parkways System, which was part of the Safe Growth Plan created by former Tennessee governor Lamar Alexander. The program was designed to formulate future state policy on environmental and conservation issues.

When MCA, the business that operated the concessions at Yosemite National Park, was almost bought out in 1990 by the Japanese company Matsushita, it was Williams who stepped in to negotiate a deal with MCA so that ownership of the $100 million concession business and historic Ahwahnee Hotel went to the National Park Foundation.

Foundation president Alan A. Rubin called Williams the leading catalyst of the effort, noting: "Ed had the creativity to see what was possible early on and the determination to see it through." Today, the attorney calls the MCA transaction simply "the Yosemite deal," even though at $7 billion, it turned into the largest national business transaction of 1990.

Wanted: Public/Private Partnerships

While some people might say Williams is driven by political ambition — he admitted he might one day run for governor — he does have a deep reverence for Tennessee's natural landscapes. His rule of not alienating industry is a means to an end. "We need to stop trying to find out who's wearing the white hats and the black hats," he says, "and work together.

"I'm a pragmatic environmental type, not one of those calamity howlers. I'm not one of those people who chain themselves to a tree or bulldozer for the sake of an endangered species. That's not to say that I take lightly any of those people. And I certainly don't take the Endangered Species Act lightly. But I view my role very differently: I set up partnerships with the private and corporate sectors to accomplish conservation goals."

Baker, Donelson, Bearman, and Caldwell

Ed E. Williams III

Ironically, this conservationist lawyer is the son of a former Johnson City-Washington County industrial recruiter — someone responsible for luring numerous businesses and industries into Northeast Tennessee. Although his father's role probably helped shape some of Williams' perspectives, the attorney claims his personal observations as an outdoorsman and nature advocate have influenced him most.

"Both factors have made me aware that partnering with industry is a necessity," says Williams. "We can't beat up industry. After all, we have to have public and private dollars to sustain our public land system."

Open Spaces

The Watauga River in Northeast Tennessee is the linchpin for the Open Spaces Conservancy. Founded by Williams, Open Spaces is a non-profit organization that seeks to link historic sites and greenways throughout Northeast Tennessee. Incorporated in April 1992, the organization's immediate goal is to create the Watauga River Corridor, a "linear corridor" connecting two major state historical sites, Fort Watauga/Sycamore Shoals in Elizabethton and Piney Flats' Rocky Mount. A linear corridor, Williams explains, is a collection of historic sites and created greenbelts or environmentally protected areas along a designated route.

In 1992, Williams attracted national attention for this local effort by inviting then U.S. Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan to go trout fishing on the Watauga.

Lujan didn't get a catch that fall day, but he *was* impressed with the Open Spaces concept.

Lujan was so impressed, in fact, that he proclaimed it a model for the nation. It seems the idea dovetailed nicely with the Interior Department's American Heritage Partnerships, an initiative that gives National Park designations to areas that don't ordinarily meet the criteria. Such areas, similar to the Watauga River Corridor, have unique historical, cultural, and natural resources that can be joined together.

Ed E. Williams III

Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan trout fishes on the Watauga River in 1992.

Once established, smaller corridors, such as the one along the Watauga River, could then be connected to other sites and historic districts in the area. For example, Williams envisions a series of corridors stretching from Abingdon, Va., to Tusculum and Greeneville, Tenn., located some 70 miles to the south.

In addition, Williams also hopes that if Open Spaces develops as hoped, Johnson City's Buffalo Mountain Ecological Park will one day join up with the Watauga River Corridor. The proposal of Buffalo Mountain Park back in the 1970s actually provided the inspiration for what was to become the Open Spaces Conservancy. Today the Johnson City park connects the city via a network of hiking trails and picnic areas to a large section of the Cherokee National Forest, situated south of Johnson City.

"We have identified every historic site, every piece of land that's owned by nonprofit organizations, or by governments and governmental agencies at every level. What we want to look at is some way to link up those sites so that someone coming into Northeast Tennessee can have an experience akin to driving the Blue Ridge Parkway," says Williams.

It has been documented that senior citizens are the biggest users of the National Park system. Williams' Conservancy is striving to meet the needs of this constituency. With the help of the Nature Conservancy, Open Spaces has already acquired at least $20,000 in contributions and land donations, including 50 acres from General Shale Corporation. An additional 1,000 acres in donations are pending, and several other informal commitments are to be negotiated in the spring and summer of 1995.

"Eventually, what I'd like for the Watauga River and some of these linear connectors to be is a place for senior citizens to take one of the most beautiful drives in Tennessee. I'd like to take my mountain bike and go along a roadway or along a mountain bike trail. I'd like to put on my hiking boots and hike it or get in my canoe and float a river corridor. I'd like for all those outdoor activities to be possible."

Now that Williams' six-year stint with the National Park Foundation's board of directors is over, he is likely to have more time for drumming up donors and support.

Other Worries, Other Fears

But other problems besides basic land conservation worry Williams. He fears that the current shrinking and downsizing of the federal government could prove devastating to the National Park Service. Park employees are living in deplorable housing, he maintains, and better roads and sewer systems are needed. Politicians have focused for too long on crowd-pleasing projects, such as visitors' centers and park expansions, and avoided facing tougher problems.

Just like the typical town, the Park Service has let housing, roads, and sewer systems deteriorate. "We've got park employees," he says, "who are living in houses that would be condemned by any city government anywhere in Tennessee. They're living in World War II surplus barracks, in trailers. Families with children are living in trailers that are rat-infested. We've ignored our national parks, our crown jewels, to create our warm fuzzies."

Williams also has opinions about industry's responsibility for environmental problems. For a while now, he insists, industry has gotten a bad rap by being blamed for all environmental woes. In his opinion, strict environmental laws have virtually ended environmental abuses by industry.

"I represent a lot of industries on environmental compliance, and I've found that 99 percent of them are doing the right thing. It's the one percent that make the headlines and give everyone a black eye."

When Williams gives speeches, he often uses the Watauga and Holston Rivers of Tennessee as cases in point to show that industrial development and conservation can be compatible. Twenty years ago, environmental abuses by industries had rendered both of these rivers virtually sterile, with no aquatic life at all. Then Elizabethton's industries, forced to comply with increasingly stringent environmental legislation, spent millions of dollars to control their discharges. The City of Elizabethton spent millions as well to upgrade its sewer treatment plant.

The result is the miracle that modern environmentalists pray for. Today, according to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, the Watauga River is one of the best trout fisheries in the Eastern United States.

On the other hand, the private household and agricultural sectors are unmonitored and generally ignored, says Williams. "You'll find more stuff going through household drains and more use of improper pesticides in agriculture, than in practically all industries combined. We aren't focusing on that. The environmental problem," he continues, "isn't just an industry problem. It's a problem everywhere — in households, in schools, in apartment buildings, in retail space."

Here again, Williams might be plying his visionary powers. Perhaps we should all take a listen.

Jill Oxendine of Johnson City, Tenn., edits Storytelling Magazine *and is a writer for The Tombras Group.*

Beyond Tobacco/Beyond Coal

by Richard Cartwright Austin

There can be life beyond tobacco and coal, but planning alternatives means finding new public and private initiatives.

Tobacco and coal, twin pillars of the Southern Appalachian economy, are both eroding. There is little new investment in the region's coal industry, while many of the large, older mines will close soon. Congress has temporarily thwarted the tobacco companies' plans to substitute cheap foreign leaf for American tobacco, but the tobacco price supports that have provided livelihood for thousands of small farmers in this region are unlikely to survive into the next decade. When these pillars fall, the Appalachian community — America's homegrown Third World — will endure devastating blows. There are creative alternatives, but they require vision, political courage, and a willingness to invest in America.

First, tobacco.

Tobacco or Fresh Produce?

After 25 years of smoking and 10 of abstinence, I was delighted when my doctor told me, "You don't need a chest X-ray. Your risk of lung cancer is back down with the general population." The small tobacco allotment assigned to my farm by the government is leased to my neighbor. He raises the tobacco allotted to his own farm plus a few leases, enough to support his mother on the homestead his family has maintained for generations.

The distinctive allotment system is a hold-over from the Great Depression. Each farm where tobacco has been grown historically retains the right to grow a limited quantity for an assured price. This system to control production and protect farmers' income is paid for by the farmers themselves and costs the federal government little. Because this system has changed little over 60 years, tobacco is the only major American crop still raised primarily on small farms — 127,000 of them in the Southeast. Consequently, small farms remain the predominant pattern of landholding in the tobacco region from Virginia and the Carolinas, west to Kentucky, Tennessee, and north Georgia.

The income from most allotments is just a few thousand dollars, "Enough to pay the taxes on the place anyhow," my neighbors say. Yet because the sale price of tobacco is stabilized by a government purchase program, this income is dependable. A little tobacco, some cattle, and father or mother working in the mine, factory, store, or school — these keep the old homeplace in the family.

The 2,500 pounds of tobacco raised on my farm's allotment probably feeds the addictions of several hundred people, and some of them, less fortunate than I, will die from it. This is why those concerned for human health will prevail in their efforts to remove the government from the tobacco business. Ironically, ending the federal tobacco program will do nothing for human health. Cigarette companies will simply buy their tobacco more cheaply from large producers, both domestic and foreign. Terminating the tobacco program will, however, collapse the economic underpinnings beneath tens of thousands of small farms, accelerate the consolidation of farmland into fewer hands, and drive families from rural homesteads.

On my farm, we have begun to experiment with alternatives. We deliver raspberries to restaurants in small cities nearby, and we share peppers, range-fed chickens, and grass-fed beef with folks who have become members of the farm to obtain meats and produce grown in wholesome conditions without artificial chemicals. Most of the foods Americans enjoy can be grown in this region.

New Crops in Old Warehouses

The problem is marketing. Selling to supermarkets is cumbersome and unprofitable for the small farmer because the chain stores want large volumes of highly standardized produce. Prices are uncertain. Independent processing plants for chickens exist no longer. The small farmer who departs from the crops traditional to the area has to develop his or her own markets. Most farmers lack the time and resources to do this.

There could be a renaissance of small farming in our region if the federal government phased in a marketing program for quality regional meats, fruits, and vegetables, while phasing out tobacco. The government could offer assured prices for limited quantities of high-quality vegetables, fruits, and meats, grown using sustainable practices that assure wholesomeness while protecting soils and the environment, and the government could assist with the distribution of these items. Farmers could elect to raise several items, but the total protected crop on each farm would be capped at a fixed dollar amount.

Extra production could be sold without price protection.

The tobacco warehouses now found in every town could be replaced by farm markets, small facilities to prepare fresh meats and produce for consumers as well as canning and freezing facilities for seasonal surplus. All supported produce would be given distinctive regional labels and marketed to grocery outlets in nearby metropolitan areas. Soft, flavorful tomatoes and fruits ripened on the vine could be rushed to market through such a system, bringing better taste to the consumer and better prices to the farmer.

This system would require initial investment of public capital and some subsidy for perhaps a decade until markets were well-established and farmers retrained. Then, as with the present tobacco program, costs could be covered through fees paid by farmers at the point of sale. In return for such public investment, consumers would receive more wholesome food, and the small farm economy would be revived. There might even be room for more families on the land.

When I quit smoking, I first thought it would be virtuous to give up my tobacco allotment as well. However, I finally concluded that I would be walking away from my neighbors. We are all guilty of polluting the earth and poisoning one another until we pull together to demand a just system that protects farmers, consumers, and the land itself. It is time to reform American agriculture so farming becomes an opportunity for those who choose it, while the rest of us enjoy wholesome, delicious food grown by neighbors who take care of the good earth.

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Coal: Beyond Distress

Now on to the problem of coal.

In Southwestern Virginia, the owners and managers of the large mines are warning the region to prepare for life beyond coal. There is virtually no investment in new mines. As seams accessible to existing mining facilities are exhausted, the operation is closed. A billion tons of coal are mined every year in the United States, more than ever before, but the economic benefits from this mining have been shrinking, while the polluting consequences intensify.

Because of underground mechanization, growing reliance upon surface mining, and the shift of production to thick Western seams, coal employment is less than a third of what it once was. Yet the spread of strip mining devours thousands of miles of land in Appalachia, the Midwest, and the Northern Plains, while the toxic consequences of burning coal are becoming both socially and environmentally unacceptable. Acid rain damages buildings, lakes, and forests; other airborne pollutants attack human health, while greenhouse warming threatens the stability of the world's climate.

Kenneth Murray

Fresh produce could provide an alternative to tobacco production, with short-term federal support for a marketing program replacing tobacco subsidies.

Many of Appalachia's most accessible coal seams have been exhausted by a century of mining, and it is unlikely that coal will ever again command the prices necessary to justify mining the more difficult reserves. Coal executives warn local communities to plan for the days when the mines must close.

Since 1959 when I first came to the Appalachian coal fields as a Presbyterian minister, I have seen hard times aplenty, but none more grim than the hardships now emerging. In a few of the oldest mining areas, such as nearby McDowell County, W. Va., the collapse of the coal economy is complete. Where 23,000 mined in 1948, only 1,500 remained at work in 1990, and the number continues to dwindle. More than half the population has fled the county since 1960, even though jobs are hard to find elsewhere. Only one-third of the working-aged population is actually employed; the rest are either unemployed (22 percent in 1990), full-time students, disabled, or out of the work force for lack of opportunity. Coal-dependent West Virginia ranks 47th among states in per capita income, and median income in McDowell County has fallen to $15,756, roughly two-thirds the West Virginia figure.

The mountain landscape has been tortured by mining. Mine acids in the streams mix with raw sewage, for only one town was left with any sewage treatment by departing companies. Families haul water home from safe springs in plastic jugs, for many cannot drink the water from their taps, and some dare not even bathe in it.

In the words of sociologist Richard Couto, counties like McDowell have dropped "beyond distress." That is, conditions are far worse than government economic indices were designed to measure. Yet even from this nadir, creative leadership has emerged in many depleted McDowell towns. "I feel invigorated," one woman told me. She and her neighbors were renovating

an abandoned school for a community center. "The coal companies aren't here to hold us down. It's a mess, but now it's our mess."

Homesteading Revisited

To provide a fresh start for the people of the Appalachian coal fields and their ravaged landscapes will require a quality of political leadership not often seen. We need two fundamental changes: land reform and deep reclamation.

During modern history, Appalachia has experienced two great transitions in landholding patterns, and a third is required to provide the basis for economic recovery. The first "land reform" took place as frontier settlers drove bands of Indian hunters from the hills and claimed private plots for subsistence farming. The second change came near the beginning of this century when land agents representing railroads and coal speculators bought mineral rights for pennies an acre from mountaineers who had little sense of the value of the coal beneath their hills.

Today, 75 percent of the land in Appalachian coal field counties is owned by coal and land companies with headquarters in places like Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, or London, England. The land is held for possible coal, gas, or timber development. Rarely will such companies sell land for local use. As mining declines, some land companies propose to develop giant landfills for urban garbage or toxic wastes on depleted coal lands. Citizens across Appalachia are resisting proposals to trash their counties with polluting wastes from urban America.

Systematic land reform is necessary to provide the basis for economic revival in the coal fields. Federal or state commissions should condemn corporately held lands that are not in production, paying the value that their owners have claimed for real estate tax purposes. The lands should then be opened for homesteading by families with productive, agricultural, residential, recreational, or reclamation intentions, after such families have been trained in the care of fragile, abused mountain lands.

The gradual reopening of Appalachian coal field lands to settlement and use by local families or by those who wish to return to the mountains would stimulate a social and economic revival from the ingenuity of the people themselves. Hundreds of thousands of small enterprises — farms, craft workshops, stores, local manufacturers, and mountain tourist facilities — would provide a more secure economic foundation than the marginal industries that mountain counties now try to lure away from high wage regions of the country. We don't need to steal factories from others. We need our land back.

Kenneth Murray

Deep reclamation and innovative land reform legislation can put devastated, unproductive lands back into use, stimulating economic and social revival.

Deep Reclamation

Deep reclamation is the second fundamental requirement for rebuilding a robust economy and a healthy society in the Appalachian coal fields. Toxic streams and unsafe water supplies, eroding strip-mined hillsides where timber struggles in vain to put down roots, these will frustrate developmental efforts. For a century, Appalachian coal has fueled the modernization of America. Its low cost did not reflect the environmental degradation left unattended in these remote hills. It is the obligation of the larger society, now enriched by our coal, to underwrite the clean-up necessary to restore healthy natural systems so the human community may rebuild.

Appalachian people have the skills required for this reclamation: We can operate bulldozers, plant trees, tend farmland, restore streams. When land is returned to the people and we receive compensation for the work of reclamation, this work will be done well by those close to the land who have eyes to watch over it and hearts to love it. It will be deep reclamation.

Therefore, as part of a land reform and homesteading strategy, Appalachian lands should be appraised for their reclamation needs. The government should set reclamation targets for each parcel and offer reasonable financial inducements to the homesteaders who undertake the work.

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Coal and tobacco, the crumbling twin pillars of the Southern Appalachian economy, can plunge us "beyond distress" when they fall. Alternatively, Appalachia can develop a new economy that offers opportunity to our people, reclaims our despoiled environment, and provides healthful products and services for other Americans to enjoy. The transition will require vision, political courage, and a willingness to invest in the places we value.

These articles first appeared in the Roanoke Times, *March 14-15, 1993.*

Richard Cartwright Austin, a Presbyterian minister in Southwest Virginia, was a leader in the struggle for Federal regulation of strip mining in the 1970s.

Groundhogs

by Jim Minick

I inherited my hate for groundhogs from Grandpa. He instilled in me, while I was still young, his utter disgust of those hairy varmints which live in holes. As I became a teenager, I took his hate as mine.

We both disliked the "hogs," as we called them, because they ate our alfalfa, or if they were daring, they'd sneak into our garden and feast on our beans or cantaloupe or tomatoes. They were tricky animals in collusion with the devil. We hated them most, though, because of the placement of their holes. These "hogs" forever wanted to dig three or four holes in the middle of every one of our hayfields; they weren't comfortable living on the edges.

This den-building in the center of fields created havoc when we worked there — like the time I was fifteen and we were baling hay. Grandpa was driving the tractor pulling the baler and wagon while Uncle Harry and I rode and stacked the hay. Grandpa saw and avoided the groundhog holes with the tractor and baler, but the wagon hit a hole and threw Uncle Harry and me clear off the wagon. Grandpa just swore a long blue line at that groundhog, then spit his tobacco in the hole.

When I was twelve and an expert with my BB gun, Grandpa gave me permission to use his .22s. I set up a target in the pasture, and he taught me how to load and shoot the .22 magnum, which had a scope. I hit the bull's eye three out of five times, and Grandpa figured I could use the gun.

The next day, off I went to hunt groundhogs. I soon learned that there was more to hunting than shooting well. I learned the patience needed for sitting on a hill above a den and waiting an hour or more for the critters to emerge; or the stealth needed to slip through a cornfield and surprise the groundhogs who sunned themselves in the open hayfield; or the anger of missing the same groundhog three straight times, and the blood-tinged joy of finally finding my mark and dropping the dead woodchuck back into his hole.

On a locust fence post next to the barn, Grandpa and I kept tallies for each summer, marking down who shot the most groundhogs. My record was eight and his, a dozen. But even killing twenty in one summer did not slow their spread into our fields. One summer when he got fed up with our losing battle, Grandpa recruited the help of smoke bombs. For the next two days, we drove from infested field to infested field. I covered all the holes but one with burlap sacks, and he lighted the smoke bomb and threw it down the remaining open hole, which I then covered with another sack. The smoke burned my eyes and made us both cough, but we knew these were small sacrifices in our battle. A month later, after we hadn't seen any groundhogs, we declared our victory. The next summer, however, we saw fresh dirt around their holes and knew we'd never win.

This summer I have been relearning that I'll never "beat" these woodchucks. For eight years, I didn't handle a gun. In that time, I went off to college, then to work in other places, and I found that guns and killing went against the grain of my stock.

But this summer has changed that. We put in a large garden in an old plot surrounded by briars which grow over the garden fence. When the beans started sprouting, we discovered groundhogs with voracious appetites living under these briars. They regularly snack on tomatoes and beans and, in one weekend, have eaten five head of cabbage and eight head of broccoli. Nothing escapes their toothy touch: birdhouse gourds,

A groundhog partakes of the local vegetation.

watermelons, even my prized cantaloupes. I had ten melons in various stages of growth, and a day later, before they were even ripe, I only had six.

To combat these varmints, I've tried just about everything. The only device that's worked is Mom's old pantyhose that I put over the melons — groundhogs don't seem to like the taste of nylon. For the peas, beans, and tomatoes, I've put up chicken wire fence that they crawl under. I regularly yell obscenities from the back porch and piss around the garden border — to no avail. Frustrated, I finally got my .22 from home, a Marlin open-sight Grandpa bought just before he died. It's a good gun, but over these past eight years, I've become a bad shot, especially when I don't have a scope to help. I've killed two groundhogs in the last three months and have missed more than I care to admit. The first one I killed was a youngster at point-blank range. He didn't know to run from me. The second was full-grown and fat from eating our beans. For two weeks off and on, I shot at him from the back porch and missed several times. Finally I set up a target in the garden and practiced shooting across the sixty feet of pasture. I figured out the sights and killed the groundhog the next day.

But there are still two old warriors who somehow always know when we're not home. Or when I am home and shooting, they know I'm not a good shot.

Next spring, I plan to put up a better fence and bury the bottom six inches. If Grandpa were still alive, he'd say I should forget the fence and just shoot the damn things. But Grandpa's dead, and I don't really like killing anymore.

Jim Minick teaches at Radford University where he is also director of the Appalachian Teachers' Network. This spring, he and his wife are planting an acre of blueberries. All are invited to come pick — except the groundhogs.

The Cabin at Devil's Fork

The old ones called it
Devil's Fork
Where furious water came
From two directions
And the quiet miraculous pool
High in the laurel hell of Stone Mountain
Was the Devil's Bathtub
Ominous names undeserved
Perched high above its wild run off
We called our cabin
The Creekhouse

•••••

Piece by piece
He built it himself
I watched listening
To the jarring counterpoint:
Pounding hammers, singing saws
Roaring earthmovers
Would rest and reveal
The birdsong, bee buzz
Cricket click crescendo
When evening falls
we sit without talking
The colors bleed and fade
To black and quiet
Each weekend we do this
bring our silence
to join this choir

•••••

The Creekhouse
A retreat before defeat
A hideaway from all
We've worked for
Where creation runs ragged
Overgrown, overblown
Out of its lines
Adam and Eve we are not
Both of us have sinned
And sinned and this garden
Is full of snakes
With no knowledge

— Rita Quillen

Among her many activities, poet Rita Quillen serves on Now & Then's *advisory board. This poem will be included in a forthcoming collection from Sow's Ear Press entitled* Counting the Sums.

Birth of a Citizen Coalition

West Virginia's Environmental Council

When it comes to environmental protection, Appalachia in general — and West Virginia in particular — are not generally regarded as cutting edge. In fact books such as Harry Caudill's 1962 *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* speak to the region's long history of exploiting its natural and human resources. How then did it come to be that a National Governor's Association bulletin was able to report: "The [1991] West Virginia Ground Water Protection Act is one of the strongest state groundwater protection measures yet enacted"?

The main reason West Virginia has produced such strong environmental legislation can be traced to a group of citizens who organized into a powerful political force, the West Virginia Environmental Council (WVEC). As a member of the WVEC board since its christening at a meeting held in a Morgantown Hardees in late 1989, I have watched the WVEC develop into the central voice of the environmental movement in this Appalachian state.

The youngest of 40-some state environmental coalitions, the WVEC is one of the broadest-based of them all. Composed of national, statewide, and local groups, it includes a very eclectic mix of people, from housewives to professors to lawyers to farmers. In contrast to other more issue-oriented coalitions, the WVEC is unique in its involvement in virtually all the major environmental issues facing West Virginia.

By the late 1980s, citizens groups were forming all over West Virginia, groups such as the Friends of the Little Kanawha (FOLK); People Concerned with MIC (methyl isocyanate of Bhopal fame); the Team Effort Against Ruining Southern West Virginia (TEARS WV), and Mon Organization for a Viable Environment (MOVE). Such groups usually formed in response to a local environmental issue, such as a mega-landfill proposal, a strip mine expansion, chemical plant emissions, or some other perceived threat to a community's quality of life.

Meanwhile, environmental issues had moved into the forefront of the nation's agenda. Statewide and national groups, groups like the Sierra Club, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, and Trout Unlimited, had established a presence in West Virginia. These groups deal with a host of issues, from the local to the national level. Because these groups tend to be around for the long haul, they often provide underlying support for many local initiatives.

All told, six main ingredients went into the development of the WVEC. The first essential ingredient was citizen volunteers, and West Virginia had hundreds of them in organizations scattered across the state. About a dozen West Virginia environmental leaders saw the need and the opportunity to create a formal coalition among the numerous citizen groups. We felt that by developing an efficient communication network, we could greatly expand our influence and harness the energy of the thousands of West Virginia citizens concerned about environmental matters. We believed that we could make environmental protection a statewide priority.

The Groundwater Coalition

At a 1987 conference held at West Virginia University in Morgantown, 150 attendees heard experts describe the nature of the various threats to the state's groundwater quality. Groundwater is found below the water table and serves as a source of both well water and stream water. Over 50 percent of West Virginia's population, and over 90 percent of its rural population, depend directly on groundwater for their drinking water. The quality of West Virginia's groundwater was being threatened by pollution from numerous human activities, such as coal mining, natural gas extraction, waste disposal, agricultural use of chemicals, and the operation of septic tanks.

The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), a New York-based national organization that makes use of market forces and the courts to address environmental issues, had recently set up an office in Charleston. In 1989, EDF received a grant from the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE), a private foundation based in Richmond, Va.

One of VEE's goals is to improve water quality in the Kanawha and Ohio River Valleys. The grant was to help EDF organize a West Virginia Groundwater Coalition to provide a political block strong enough to pass a good groundwater protection act, an act considered critical to the future of this relatively pure West Virginia resource. In 1990, when EDF closed its West Virginia office, the Endowment funded the West Virginia Citizen Action Group (WV CAG), a Charleston-based organization that works on issues related to health care, government ethics, and the environment. WV CAG was to finish the job that EDF had started.

What the VEE didn't realize at the time was that these grants also planted the seeds for what was to become the WVEC. WV CAG ultimately hired a full-time environmental coordinator, a former coal operator named Norm Steenstra, to do the coalition's organizing work. Today, Steenstra is still the environmental coordinator for WV CAG as well as a WVEC board member and its chief lobbyist.

Hiring Steenstra moved us away from being a solely volunteer work force and provided the fledgling organization with a person who had the time, as well as the energy, political savvy, love of media, and dedication to make this Coalition succeed. Having a paid staff person was the second key ingredient in what eventually evolved into the highly effective WVEC.

by Mary J. Wimmer

Being able to lay claim to office space was the third ingredient that moved the Coalition forward. The Groundwater Coalition was based in WV CAG's office in Charleston. Located a few minutes from the state capitol, CAG became the main contact point and meeting place for those from all around the state who came to Charleston to lobby for environmental legislation. Staff members and volunteers could take phone messages, hold meetings, activate phone trees, have access to a computer and a Xerox, and, last but certainly not least, enjoy the luxury of having a place to change into comfortable clothes from more formal lobbying attire. Many of us found the CAG office a safe and comforting place after a day surrounded by industry lobbyists.

The fourth crucial ingredient was our newsletter. What began as the *Groundwater Coalition Newsletter* became *GREEN,* the Grass Roots Environmental Effort Newsletter of the WVEC. *GREEN's* first editor, Sheila McEntee of the National Audubon Society, put it out at the end of every week of the legislative session — a feat begun by Steenstra and Joyce Cooper of WV CAG during the early Groundwater Coalition days. It usually came out monthly when the legislature was in recess. This report kept hundreds of people throughout the state up-to-date on environmental activities. It went to anyone who asked for it, free if need be.

Activists had fun reading *GREEN.* It was freewheeling environmentalism at its best, giving volunteers a fine platform for their issues. Not only was legislative action discussed, but also anything that dealt with the environment could find its way into *GREEN's* pages — from cartoons to profiles of WVEC members. Its reporting of environmental groups' activities around the state always confirmed the strength of the movement, and Steenstra's tongue-in-cheek humor could uplift any tired volunteer (as well as irritate a politician now and then).

Outgrowing a Name

It didn't take long for Steenstra to realize that groundwater protection was only one of the many issues facing West Virginia. People began coming out of the woodwork to beat him over the head about their particular concerns: from mine reclamation and acid mine drainage to medical and hazardous waste incinerators to land use and public lands. To protect Norm's precious head, the Coalition newsletter began covering these and other key topics.

Solid waste became a major rallying issue. Norm Steenstra dubbed this particular group of activists "The Garbage Crazies." They were led by Martha Huffman of the Wetzel County group Halt Out-of-State Garbage (HOG). She was called the "Housewife from Hell" in a July 1991 *Family Circle* article on women who have made a difference.

Developers had proposed importing thousands of tons of municipal waste per day from out-of-state metropolitan areas and depositing it in huge landfills in West Virginia's rural mountains. Affiliated with large corporations, the developers generally lived out-of-state as well (Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Netherlands). They were drawn to West Virginia by the availability of lots of cheap land.

From 1988 to 1991, with pressure from the Coalition, the West Virginia Legislature passed some of the most progressive and comprehensive legislation on rural solid waste management in the nation.

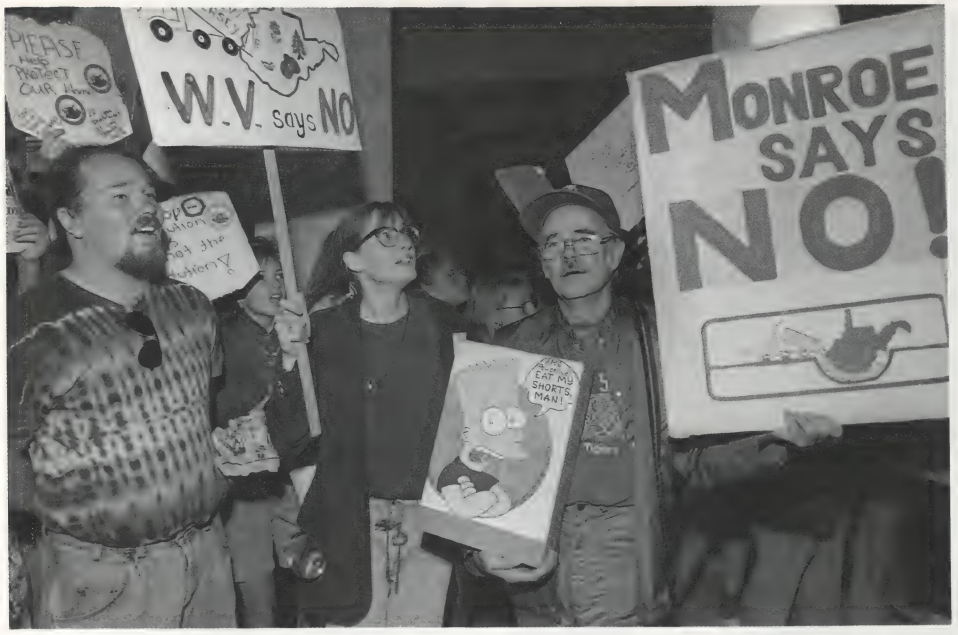
Since rural West Virginia had no effective land use planning in place, its citizens did not have a say in land use decisions. The outside firms usually targeted economically depressed areas, such as McDowell or Berkeley counties, and promised them jobs. The two largest proposed landfills would each ultimately take in *3.6 million tons* of garbage annually, together more than five times that generated by the entire state.

Soon people from all over the state were committed to stopping West Virginia from becoming the dumping capital of the East. Monstrous landfills for out-of-state waste would generate huge profits for the dump owners. Meanwhile, landfill leachate would threaten the quality of the state's ground and surface waters. West Virginia's mountain topography would be destroyed as its valleys and streams were filled. Its roads, which were not designed for huge haul trucks, would rapidly deteriorate. Finally, these massive landfills would promote a very common "out-of-sight and out-of-mind" mentality, undermining efforts at recycling, biodegradation, and conservation so badly needed nationwide.

Activists also realized that West Virginia's own solid waste, amounting to approximately 120,000 tons per month at the time, needed to be dealt with more effectively. We needed to stop the waste from either ending up in unlined landfills or in roadside/riverside dumps. Recognizing the connection with groundwater protection, the solid waste groups naturally joined, first the Groundwater Coalition and later the WVEC. They became a great source of citizen influence in the state legislature.

From 1988 to 1991, with pressure from the Coalition, the West Virginia Legislature passed some of the most progressive and comprehensive legislation on rural solid waste management in the nation. Tom Degen of Chloe, W. Va., became WVEC's expert on solid waste bills. Two of the most important pieces of legislation passed were the 1990 Solid Waste Referendum and the 1991 Comprehensive Solid Waste Acts.

The 1990 Solid Waste Referendum Act gave citizens the right to petition for a referendum in which they could vote on whether to approve construction in their county of a "Class A" landfill, one that accepts 10,000 or more tons of waste per month. The first referendum, made possible by the Barbour County Concerned Citizens aided by WVEC, halted a large landfill. When this developer went into nearby Webster County, Doyle Coakley, a local farmer, gathered his neighbors (and the signs used in Barbour County) and quickly drove him out. These victories were important examples of new local empowerment against out-of-state exploitation.



WVEC

Environmental activists crowd the West Virginia Capitol rotunda at the first E-Day Celebration at the West Virginia State Legislature, January 1990.

Governor Gaston Caperton actually called a Special Session of the State Legislature in 1991 to pass the West Virginia Comprehensive Solid Waste Act. Among other things, this law reduced what could legally be placed in landfills (no yard waste, tires, batteries). It increased recycling provisions, and, critical to addressing the problem of mega-landfills for out-of-state waste, it placed a cap on landfill size of 30,000 tons per month.

This limit did what a McDowell County referendum narrowly missed accomplishing: It drove out the Philadelphia, Pa., developer proposing a huge landfill there. Since passage of this legislation, there has been over a 15 percent reduction in the amount of local waste that has been deposited in West Virginia landfills.

Back to the Tale

Let's see. So far, we have lots of volunteers, Norm Steenstra and staff, the CAG office, and *GREEN.* The last two ingredients were Environment Day (E-Day) in the legislature and the Annual Environmental Convention.

The first E-Day was on January 22, 1990. During this landmark event, over 600 people from around the state came to the Capitol to declare the 1990s as the "Decade of the Environment" in West Virginia. The diversity of groups, from Mountaineers for a Clean Environment to the new Vandalia Chapter of the State Audubon Council, showed in the numerous display tables overflowing with environmental propaganda and t-shirts. Speakers Lois Gibbs, who became an activist when she discovered that her Love Canal, N. Y., home had been built atop a toxic waste dump, and Brock Evans, a Washington lobbyist for the National Audubon Society, highlighted the day. Evans and I gave formal presentations on the condition of our state and federal environmental protection programs to the House of Delegates.

Constituents bombarded their legislators with environmental concerns. The events were covered by the statewide media, thanks largely to reporter Monty Fowler of the *Huntington* (W.Va.) *Dispatch.* This first E-Day's great success solidified WVEC's course.

The first Annual Environmental Convention was put together in September, 1989, at the Cedar Lakes Conference Center near Ripley, in the western part of the state. Open to everyone, the meeting's main purpose was to assemble the state's environmental advocates and put together the following year's legislative and nonlegislative agendas.

The opening session, dubbed "We all live on a dot," allowed us to share personally why we were there. This gathering, more than any other of the weekend, made me aware of how powerful we could be. The remaining sessions consisted of brainstorming and consensus-building among the more than 100 attendees, with no formal voting. It worked great. All participants had a chance to contribute to the final product, *Blueprint for the Environment,* edited by Brian Hagenbuch. With its detailed descriptions of each issue, this booklet was a great aid in educating activists. Also out of this meeting came a working group charged with developing bylaws for a more formal, broad-based coalition that, by year's end, had been named the West Virginia Environmental Council.

Over 300 people attended the 1990 Convention at Jackson's Mill near Weston. The Saturday morning Dot session, as these key sessions came to be known, lasted for hours. The daunting task of reaching consensus was accomplished first by breaking into small groups, each focused on a specific issue, then by regrouping.

WVEC: Nuts & Bolts

Planners of WVEC decided early on not to make the Coalition a typical membership organization. Most activists were already committed to a particular group, and we wanted their energy augmented, not diminished in any way. Also, we did not want the Council bogged down in organizational paperwork. The WVEC has just enough of a structure to solidify the statewide coalition, but it grants a great deal of autonomy to the constituent individuals and groups who "join" simply by being put on the mailing list and showing up for Council actions. Sierra Club's Jim Kotcon helped us construct a set of bylaws consistent with this open-policy goal. By and large, this important concept has served us well. In August 1991, WVEC was incorporated as a state nonprofit organization

Our structure is based on geography, not member groups. I believe this has worked to our advantage by minimizing the turf battles often typical of other environmental coalitions. We divided the state into eight regions; within each region, activists select three local representatives for three-year terms that rotate in order to provide continuity. These 24 people, along with three at-large members and the recent addition of three organizational members from issue-based state coalitions, such as the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, make up the 30-member Board of Directors. We operate by consensus.

Even with a large board, it works.

The office of Council president is a key position. The president, currently computer consultant Beth Little of Hillsboro, facilitates our almost quarterly meetings and keeps the WVEC calendar of events on track. Acting as a WVEC spokesperson is often a minor part of the job. Due to the member groups' autonomy, individuals are careful about what is said on behalf of the whole Council.

Past presidents Perry McDaniel, a Charleston lawyer, and Kim Baker, a Huntington environmental organizer, not only got the WVEC off to a good start, but they also dealt well with our initial growing pains. Most have been minor. Some of these, not surprisingly, involved personality clashes and turf conflicts. I believe that the latter were inevitable as we tried to fashion an umbrella group without infringing on the roles that the individual groups had traditionally played.

When a person or group is committed to a cause, the necessary funds somehow appear. What I have found amazing is how little money it really takes to make a big impact, especially when you consider the comparatively huge sums of money industry spends to counter our efforts. WVEC operates on an annual budget of under $10,000.

After the VEE grants got us off to a good start, WVEC scraped for funds from member organizations and individuals. In addition, we took advantage of WV CAG's subsequent grants and generosity in terms of staff support, office space, and copying equipment, and we made it work. West Virginia's mainstream environmental organizations provide most of the funds: WV Highlands Conservancy, Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, Audubon Council, WV Rivers Coalition, and the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC). These funds, along with the free housing provided by Charleston environmentalists, give citizens who might not otherwise have the means the opportunity to devote significant hours on the legislative front. In addition to the funding, many individuals donate lots of volunteer time.

Education

One of the most important things WVEC is able to do is educate volunteers and staff on key issues by calling on activists who have specific areas of expertise. For example, for a question on incineration, we went to Missy Wolverton, a feisty woman who moved to Charleston from Calhoun County and became a critical part of our lobbying team. For a mining question, we started with Cindy Rank of Rock Cave or Tom Rodd of Morgantown; for air toxics, we had Brian Hagenbuch of Huntington. As the West Virginia University scientists in the group, Jim Kotcon and I, tagged the "technicrats," were called upon to give scientific or technical interpretations, as well as to help draft and review lots of legislative bills. And of course, if we ever needed the proverbial "sound bite," we went to Norm Steenstra.

Everyone gave legislative testimony. We became competent at quickly planning finely orchestrated presentations that analyzed the issue in question, conveyed broad public concern, and more than balanced the opponents' efforts. Phone lines were always burning as our folks in Charleston reached out to our regional contacts with the latest news and needs.

WVEC

Members of the 1991 WVEC lobby team celebrate their successes, including passage of the West Virginia Groundwater Protection Act. Top to bottom and left to right: Martha Huffman, Tom Degen, Courtney Morrow, Wendy Ratcliff, Cindy Rank, Sheila McEntee, Mary Wimmer, Gary Zuckett, Tamara Schulman, Missy Wolverton, Norm Steenstra.

The Groundwater Bandwagon

Initially, WVEC's main legislative goal was passage of a bill that would effectively protect West Virginia's groundwater. The main push, begun with the VEE Groundwater Coalition grant, culminated in 1991 with the passage of the West Virginia Groundwater Protection Act. The whole process took just over three years — not long for such a comprehensive piece of legislation.

During both the 1989 and 1990 legislative sessions, we attempted to get our own progressive bill passed with the help of House Speaker Chuck Chambers, a Democrat from Huntington who signed on as sponsor. The bill's main feature was the "non-degradation" clause. This clause stipulated that West Virginia's existing groundwater quality would be maintained, even if that quality actually surpassed what was necessary to provide safe drinking water. In contrast, industry wanted to allow groundwater pollution as long as the level of pollutants met standards that supposedly protect beneficial uses.

Another key part of our bill was a citizen suit provision which would allow a person to sue another for polluting groundwater, a provision that industry could not abide. The opposing forces — primarily coal, natural gas, chemical, and agricultural businesses and their trade groups — beat our legislation back repeatedly, but we kept making slow progress.

With minutes to go in the 1990 session, some quick changes were made in a conference bill, with the governor's office working with industry-backed legislators in our absence to fashion a law acceptable to them, and our key provisions of non-degradation and citizen suit were left out. WVEC members signaled Representative Chambers to kill the bill just before the bell ending the session went off.

We felt tired and beaten, for we had come so close. I recall an administrative assistant who typed bills for the House looking me in the eye and gently saying, "I'm sorry." Delegate Mary Pearl Compton, a Democrat from Monroe County whose district is the home of Quibell's groundwater source, brought out a wonderful bottle of raspberry-flavored sparkling water to comfort us — and to remind us of what was still at stake.

ETSU

News CASS

Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services • East Tennessee State University

Spring-Summer 1995

Archives & Special Collections
A Division of Sherrod Library

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

INSIDE:

Mt. Mitchell Hiking Diary Published, p. 3

Annual Art Show Set At Reece, p. 6

CENTER PLANNING BEGINS FOR APPALACHIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA

Current reference works about Appalachia are scarce, and few are comprehensive in their approach to the region. To answer that need, the center announces plans to edit and publish an ***Encyclopedia of Appalachia*** that will address topics, events, and individuals significant in Appalachian history.

The encyclopedia will be a multidisciplinary work that will take several years to complete. Center director Dr. Jean Speer says, "We're excited by the prospect of making this contribution to our region. It represents an enormous investment of time and funds for us, but we already have enthusiastic expressions of support from friends and colleagues of the center."

Photo by: Jim Sledge, University Relations, 1995

Rudy Abramson and Jean Speer discuss the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* project.

Co-editing the volume with Speer will be **Rudy Abramson**, Washington, D. C. correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, a long-time believer in the need for such a project. Abramson has enlisted the interest of former Tennessee Senator Howard H. Baker Jr., historian David McCullough, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and other influential sponsors. During a recent visit to the center, Abramson said "An authoritative reference book devoted to Appalachia will help stimulate scholarship and enhance public awareness and understanding of the region." While visiting ETSU, Abramson met center staff, members of the university administration, and various friends of the center.

Abramson has covered Washington, D. C. for the *Los Angeles Times* for more than 25 years as national

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SHELBRIDGE ROOM HONORS HERITAGE

To help commemorate our 10th anniversary, the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services established an **Appalachian Heritage Room** in Shelbridge, the historic home provided for presidents of East Tennessee State University. The room, which serves as a guest room in the home, is decorated with the finest in antique and contemporary art and craft work from the Appalachian region.

Contributions for the room came from many places

continued on page 2

Now & Then Seeks Contributors For Upcoming Issues

Now & Then, the Appalachian magazine published by the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at ETSU, is accepting fiction, poetry, essays, interviews, non-fiction articles, and photography about Appalachian life for the next two issues.

The deadline for the Fall-Winter issue on **Appalachian Entrepreneurs and Innovators** is **July 1**. This theme is a broad one. We're open to any submissions that answer the question: "What new ideas and approaches to old problems are coming out of Appalachia?" We'd like to hear about people starting new, imaginative businesses or coming up with exciting solutions to problems in any walk of life.

The Spring 1996 issue will be **Conserving Appalachia**, with a deadline of **November 1, 1995**. This will be an opportunity to talk about the task of preserving this region's unique way of life— for example, by documenting Appalachian culture for future generations, by keeping some aspect of Appalachian life alive, or by adapting some custom from the past to present needs.

For more information, or to obtain writer's guidelines, please write *Now & Then*, CASS/ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City, TN 37614-0556. We very much appreciate *written*, rather than phone queries. ◆

Heritage, continued from page 1

in the mountain region, including Kentucky, Southwest Virginia, Western North Carolina, and East Tennessee. The room features such items as a Star of Kentucky quilt, an 1890s vintage crazy quilt, a variety of other quilts and quilted pieces, handmade Windsor chairs, original oil and watercolor paintings, antique clothing, ceramics, woodcarvings, a cherry corner cupboard, an antique rope bed, and books about the Appalachian region. The craft artists and the donors are identified for visitors to the room.

"Handicrafts are an integral part of the culture of the mountain people."
—Allen Eaton, *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands* (1937)

The staff developed the idea for the room from a "Mountain Room" in the White House during the term of Woodrow Wilson. The White House room was furnished in the best of mountain craft work from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Believing that fine art and craft work are among Appalachia's great gifts to the world, the center celebrates that tradition in this special room.

The center acknowledges the enthusiastic support received for this project from the following individuals and organizations: Dr. Roy Nicks, president of ETSU, and Ann Nicks; David Appalachian Crafts of David, Ky., especially director Julie Johnson; Susan Campbell, owner of The Mountain Heritage Collection in Knoxville, Tenn.; Dr. Murray Scher; the Bristol Art Guild, especially artist Susan Updyke; Grace Spurrell; quilter Wynne Stewart; painter Nancy Earnest; the Historical Society of Washington County, Inc.; Louise Palmer; quilter Hazel Speer; chairmaker Curtis Buchanan of Jonesborough, Tenn.; Kathleen Curtis Wilson; William Baylor Adams, Cedar Bluff, Va.; Fred H. Combs, Tazewell, Va.

All items are on loan or are gifts to the **Reece Museum**, a division of the center. We still welcome contributions, either antique or craft items, or financial sponsorship of items in the room to make them permanent acquisitions for the museum.

If you would like to see the room, would like more information, or would like to make a donation, please contact the center. ◆

DANCE BOOK PUBLISHED

Communities in Motion: Dance, Community and Tradition in America's Southeast and Beyond (280 pp., $59.95) has been published by Greenwood Press. It is a collection of essays and interviews on vernacular dance; its co-editors are center assistant director **Jane Harris Woodside** and former center fellow, Susan Eike Spalding. For ordering information, write CASS/ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614-0556 or call 615-929-5348.

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Archives & Special Collections

Archives of Appalachia
Special Collections
University Archives

D. R. Beeson, Sr. Papers, Archives & Special Collections, ETSU

Beeson and Mathes with group of men at weather station on top of Mt. Mitchell, 1915.

Series Planned For Beeson Diaries

With the success of the recent publication of the D. R. Beeson, Sr. hiking diary, *In the Spirit of Adventure: A Hike in the Great Smoky Mountains* (noted in the last issue of *NewsCASS*), Panther Press has decided to publish all four hiking diaries housed in the Beeson Papers in the archives as a series titled, ***In the Spirit of Adventure***.

In addition to the Great Smoky Mountain diary (1914) published this past December, the series will include the publication of North Carolina hikes taken by Beeson with ETSU educator and author C. Hodge Mathes to Grandfather Mountain (1913), Table Rock (1914), and to Mt. Mitchell (1915). These volumes will be published during 1995-96 with proceeds from royalties going to support Archives and Special Collections. The Mt. Mitchell diary is being published this spring, to be followed by the Grandfather Mountain diary this fall and the Table Rock diary early in 1996.

The diaries are being edited by **Norma Myers** and **Ned Irwin** of the archives in conjunction with Charles Maynard of Panther Press. Individual volumes will contain a transcript of the diary text, reproductions of photographs taken on the hikes and included in Beeson's diaries, maps, a biographical sketch of Beeson and Mathes, glossaries, and other introductory materials.

On the Mt. Mitchell hike, taken in May of 1915, Beeson and Mathes encounter descendants of Big Tom Wilson, and are led by Dolph Wilson to the site where his father, Big Tom, discovered the body of Dr. Elisha Mitchell (1793-1857), who had fallen to his death on the mountain later to bear his name.

continued on page 5

Collection Spotlight: PHOTOGRAPHING APPALACHIA

The department is fortunate to have a number of collections which photographically document the history and culture of the Southern Mountain region. Some collections focus on customs, ways of life and the people of the region, while others center on buildings and landscapes.

East Tennessee is the subject of a number of collections, foremost among them the **Sing Along With Appalachia**, the **Clifford Maxwell Photographs** and the **Burr Harrison Photographs. Sing Along With Appalachia** contains both negatives and prints of life during the mid to late 1930s in the area now encompassed by the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Photos depict such activities as making lye

continued on page 5

Archives and

Selected Recent Acquisitions

EDWIN C. ALEXANDER COLLECTION
1904-52 and undated. .5 linear ft.
Consists of copies of newsclippings and scrapbook items on Crawford Alexander and his role in Elizabethton, Tenn. city government, including the bringing of the rayon plants to the city. In addition, there is correspondence and legal documents concerning Alexander and his father, J. H. Alexander. Donated by Edwin C. Alexander, Elizabethton, Tenn.

APPALACHIAN-SCOTTISH STUDIES COLLECTION
1991-94. .75 linear ft. Additions.
Consists of 1991 schedule of lectures and events; Ian Fraser's lecture notes on the settlement and geography of Scotland; two oversized maps of Scotland; an audio cassette of Gaelic songs; audio and video recordings of 1993 and 1994 lectures, interviews, and performances; student research papers done for the 1994 program; an audio cassette recording of Gaelic songs recorded by Donald Archie MacDonald with lyrics to the songs. Donated by Thomas Burton, Department of English, ETSU.

HIRAM FAIN DIARY
1850-70. 1 item.
Consists of a photocopy of the original diary kept by Hiram Fain. Original in the possession of the East Tennessee Historical Society, Knoxville, Tenn. Donated by John Fain, Memphis, Tenn.

CHARLES GUNTER, JR. COLLECTION
1994. Addition.
Consists of nine audio cassette recordings of interviews with area residents conducted for Gunter's oral folklife project. Interviews focus on life in Appalachia during the "Great Depression" of the 1930s. Donated by Charles Gunter, Jr., Dept. of Geography and Geology, ETSU.

JOSEPH S. HALL PAPERS
1931-88. 7 linear ft. Addition.
Consists of audiotape recordings of interviews and music (1937-c. 1969) taped by Hall, miscellaneous audiotapes, 16mm and 8mm film recordings, and audiodiscs. In addition, two linear feet of paper records contain field notes, indexes and informant lists, ballads, and Smoky Mountain lore, as well as books and journals (1931-88). Donated by Michael Montgomery, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S. C.

HARRIS-WOFFORD FAMILY HISTORY
1990-92. .25 linear ft.
Consists of a photocopy of a narrative on the history of the Harris and Wofford families written by Charles Wofford. Donated by Charles Wofford, Johnson City, Tenn.

LEE R. HERNDON COLLECTION
1958-78. 1,100 slides.
Consists of 1,100 color slides of birds and flora of East Tennessee, Florida, and Texas taken by Lee R. Herndon. Donated by Lee R. Herndon, Elizabethton, Tenn.

ABRAHAM JOBE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
1850-70. 4 folders.
Consists of a photocopy of the autobiography of Abraham Jobe. Original in the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tenn. Donated by Mildred Kozsuch, Jonesborough, Tenn.

MAXINE KENNY COLLECTION
1977-87. 3.5 linear ft.
Consists of materials on environmental issues in Appalachia, including clippings, interview transcripts for public radio programs, and audio cassette recordings of interviews taken for "A Time to Reap" and "Down to Earth: the Appalachian Family Farm." Donated by Maxine Kenny, Nickelsville, Va.

B. CARROLL REECE MUSEUM RECORDS
1981-94. 10 linear ft. Additions.
Consists of office files of the museum, including material on grants, meetings, scholarships, exhibits, museum-sponsored activities, museum management, regional and state organizations for Tennessee artists, financial records (1987-91), files of the Aesthetics and Heritage Committee (1986-94), and personnel records (1982-91). Donated by Margaret Carr and Blair White, Reece Museum, ETSU.

ARCHIVES STAFF

Norma Myers, Director
Marie Tedesco, Technical Services Archivist
Ned Irwin, Public Services Archivist
Ed Speer, Library Assistant
Georgia Greer, Secretary

Special Collections

WAYNE SCOTT RIAL COLLECTION
1987-94. .5 linear ft.
Consists of materials on gospel singing in southern Appalachia, including a report written by Rial and a series of index cards containing announcements of gospel sings in the region, 1987-94. Donated by Wayne Scott Rial, Bristol, Tenn.

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY COLLECTION
1980-93. .5 linear ft.
Consists of materials on Roan Mountain (N.C.-Tenn.) and Yellow Mountain (N.C.), including reports, a case statement booklet, a computer disc and printout on the flora and fauna on Roan Mountain, and three reports on the flora and fauna on Yellow Mountain. Donated by Jerry Nagle, Dept. of Biological Sciences, ETSU.

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS RECORDS
1949-79. 19 items. Addition.
Consists of 19 reels of 16mm film related to East Tennessee State University, primarily to ETSU football games, including Burley Bowls in 1949, 1952-53, the 1969 Grantland Rice Bowl, and a 1979 game with James Madison University. Transferred from B. Carroll Reece Museum, ETSU.

W. B. "PAT" WATSON COLLECTION
1920-85. 1 linear ft. and 5 oversize folders.
Consists of road maps of Tennessee, Johnson City, Knoxville, and Chattanooga; photographs (including post cards) of Johnson City, Tenn. and the area; newspapers from Johnson City, Maryville, Bristol, and Knoxville, Tenn.; memorabilia on Johnson City, Tenn.; pamphlets, brochures, and clippings on Johnson City, Tenn. Donated by Herstyne Watson, Gadsden, Ala.

WCYB-TV COLLECTION
1994. 1 item.
Consists of one VHS format videotape recording entitled "Bristol: The Birthplace of Country Music." Donated by Greg Wallace, WCYB-TV, Bristol, Va. ◆

OTHER RECENT DONATIONS

* Two film chains from **WCYB-TV**, Bristol, Va., through the efforts of **Greg Wallace.**

* A financial gift made in the memory of **Kent Herrin** by **Mary Beth Spina.**

* A financial gift from former archives director **Richard M. Kesner** to both the Archives Fund and the Tom Daniel Fund.

Beeson, continued from page 3

As in the earlier diary published, the account of the trip is filled with Beeson's dry and subtle wit, along with insights into what was involved in those early hiking days of making one's way to the highest point in the eastern United States and safely back down again.

The **Mt. Mitchell diary** may be purchased through the Center for Appalachian Studies & Services at ETSU, from the Panther Press, P. O. Box 636, Seymour, Tenn. 37865, or in area bookstores. The prices are $12.95 (hardback) and $7.95 (paperback). ◆

Photographs, continued from page 3

soap, quilting, cutting sugar cane and weaving on a loom. Both the Maxwell photos and the Burr Harrison photos concentrate on Johnson City. The Maxwell collection includes prints of businesses, street scenes and events in Johnson City in the years from 1950-70. The Harrison photos concentrate on Johnson City in the early 20th century.

A number of collections contain images from East Tennessee and/or Southwest Virginia. The **Kelly and Green Collection**, for example, contains prints and negatives of Bristol, Tennessee and Virginia schools, churches and businesses, 1934-40. The **Charles Tiller Collection** includes black and white prints of logging in Southwest Virginia, while the **Kenneth Murray Photographs** consists of black and white prints on various subjects, among them coal mining, farm life, handcrafts, country stores, tobacco growing, railroads and plowing.

West Virginia is represented in the **Jeanne M. Rasmussen Collection.** Rasmussen's work concentrates on the coal-mining areas of that state. Contained in the collection are photos of miners and their families, as well as prints of mines, strip-mined land, and coal-mining communities.

The archives holds a great many photographs which relate to railroads. Prominent among the collections which focus on railroads are the **Henry Blackwell Photographs,** the **James T. Dowdy, Sr. Photographs,** the **James A. Goforth Collection,** the **William Cary Hattan Photographs,** and the **Jack Underwood Photographs.** The Blackwell collection consists of images which depict the August 13, 1940 flood on the Linville River Railroad. The Dowdy prints include images of the East Tennessee and Western Carolina Railroad, the Linville River Railroad, and the Carolina, Clinchfield and Ohio Railroad. The Goforth collection contains prints of places along the route of the Clinchfield Railway, while the Hattan prints focus on the building of the Clinchfield in the first and second decades of the 20th centuries. The Underwood photos are contained in a small collection which contains copy negatives and contacts of the 1904 New Market train wreck and other railroad-related topics.

These and other collections in the archives contribute to the photographic portrayal of the Southern Mountain region.◆

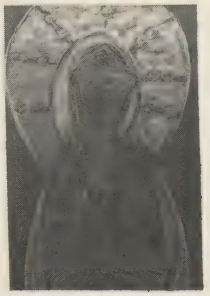
Carroll Reece Museum

EXHIBITIONS

Printmaking
The Reece continues its ongoing series spotlighting printmaking techniques. We open the month of April with an exhibit of contemporary works from Pace Galleries in New York City. This collection includes examples of aquatint, etching, serigraph, silkscreen, woodcut, drypoint, stratograph, relief print, and intaglio, among others. In June, we will continue showing various prints from the permanent collection in Gallery A.

Southern Voices
"This exhibit seeks to explore the ways in which the speech of Southerners exemplifies southern culture and defines it. It delves into the origins of the language, as much for the purpose of dispelling old myths as for clarifying and defining the truths they convey. Linguists tell us that the voices of the South are more alike than different. Regardless of racial, religious, or professional divisions, and regardless even of differences in national origin, there is unity in the speech of this region, grounded in common experience of the complex whole that is the South." (brochure, *Southern Voices: English in the American South*) A project of the Tennessee Humanities Council, the interactive exhibit, "Southern Voices," will aid your unraveling of stereotypical images of Southerners, discovery of word origins, and allow you to see and hear five Southerners from across the South.

First Tennessee Bank Show
The Seventeenth Annual First Tennessee Bank Art Competition and Exhibition fills the museum in May with the finest of regional artistic endeavors. Opening on the evening of May 4, the "Bank Show" is a collaborative effort, combining the resources and talents of the Johnson City Area Arts Council, First Tennessee Bank, regional artists, and the Carroll Reece Museum. The competition is open to persons residing in the state of Tennessee or within a 200-mile radius of Johnson City, Tenn. Jeff Fleming, chief curator for the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) in Winston-Salem, will serve as juror and will select work for inclusion in the exhibit and designate award winners. The First Award winner will be invited to have a one-person exhibit the following year. Sammie Nicely, First Award recipient in 1994, will present an exhibit this year at the Arts Council Gallery, downtown Johnson City, in conjunction with the "Bank Show" at the Reece.



"Regaining Our Heritage . . ."
by Sammie Nicely

The Hidden Warriors: Prisoners of War
Fifty years ago, Americans celebrated the ending of World War II. On May 8, 1945, German forces surrendered to the combined Allied Army; on August 14 of that same year, the Japanese Imperial Army also surrendered. Although the fighting had ceased, the conflict continued as negotiations determined the fates of those captured during the war. In most cases, prisoners of war were allowed to return to their families, while others were further detained to be tried for their alleged war crimes.

While awaiting such a trial, a group of German SS prisoners of war passed the time creating works of art. These paintings reflect the beauty of their environment, rather than the horrors of war. Included is a portrait of their guard, a soldier from Greeneville, Tenn., to whom they presented their collection of art. This collection, along with war posters and other paraphernalia, will explore the world conflict with a closer examination of the issues of being a prisoner of war. In commemoration of the end of the war, the Reece's summer exhibit will emphasize various aspects of the confinement of both Allied and Axis prisoners of war.

Tom Root in his studio

Tom and Peggy Root: Recent Work
The Reece's early autumn exhibit will feature the figurative/traditional oil paintings of artists Tom and Peggy Root of Jonesborough, Tenn. Since moving to the area from Lyme, Conn. two and a half years ago, the Roots have established themselves as classically trained artists as evidenced by their finely detailed and precisely executed portraits, landscapes, and still lifes. Both attended the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Fla., and continued their studies at the Lyme Academy of Fine Art in Connecticut. Peggy's luminious landscapes evoke a mood of tranquility, while Tom's portraits and detailed still lifes are reminiscent of the work of the old masters. Tom is also at work on a children's book, which he has written and illustrated.

ARTISTS IN ACTION

April's Artist in Action will be Darla Beverage, a weaver from Gray, Tenn. Ms. Beverage will demonstrate her craft on the museum's large antique two-harness loom. She has produced award-winning tapestries as well as functional clothing which she markets throughout the area, and currently serves as secretary for the Overmountain Weavers' Guild.

The Reece Museum's curator, Blair H. White, will demonstrate jewelry-making techniques as Artist in Action for May. White has taught numerous workshops and has served as an adjunct faculty member in ETSU's Department of Art. He currently designs and produces jewelry and small sculpture in a variety of media.

LUNCH BREAK AT THE REECE

The Appalachian Recorder Ensemble will entertain the Lunch Break audience in April with early music from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. The four-member group, playing together since 1992, provides non-traditional music for educational and social events of all types.

May's Lunch Break features the talents of folk musician Stevan Jackson. Jackson, known locally for his "Sense and Nonsense" column in *The Loafer*, has entertained audiences throughout the area with his guitar, Irish harp, and storytelling.

Artists in Action and Lunch Break at the Reece conclude with the May offerings, and will resume in September.

PROGRAM NOTES

A free public address will precede the FORM-sponsored trip to Charleston, S.C., for the Spoleto Festival.

•

In association with our summer focus on World War II, the museum will present three public lectures and a panel discussion in which historians and former POWs will broaden the public's awareness of conditions on both sides of the battlefield and in prisoner-of-war camps.

•

The museum's slide curator, Nancy Jane Earnest, will conduct her annual painting workshop on Saturday, May 13. Earnest will demonstrate watercolor technique and assist students in developing their own interpretive style.

•

In conjunction with his early autumn exhibition at the museum, Tom Root will present a workshop in which students may practice classical oil painting techniques which are employed in many of his exhibited works.

ART SCHOLARSHIP NEEDS YOUR HELP!

For the past 26 years many deserving art students have received support from the Brightly Memorial Art Scholarship, and we wish to continue to provide this assistance. However, the museum has recently been notified by the Brightly Foundation that the funds have been exhausted.

Eligibility is open to all high school seniors, college students, and others in the area who wish to further their art education. The recipients of the scholarship have traditionally been chosen through an annual spring competition. A panel of judges decides on the monetary amount of the scholarship to be awarded to each recipient.

The Friends of Reece Museum has established an endowment fund for an annual scholarship, but in the meantime the museum must raise $2000 for the 1995 competition. We encourage you to make a contribution to this important part of the arts, possibly an endangered species. Please make checks payable to ***FORM 1995 Scholarship Fund***, c/o Reece Museum, Box 70660, ETSU, Johnson City, TN 37614-0660.

Susan Antkiewicz

Susan Antkiewicz, Chair
FORM Membership/Development Committee

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

REMINDER: The Reece Museum will be closed:

Friday - Sunday, April 14-16, for the Easter holiday
Tuesday, July 4, for Independence Day.

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Available Publications from the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services

Books

A Southern Appalachian Reader - edited by Nellie McNeil and Joyce Squibb. An anthology of fiction, poetry, and essays. An excellent text for high school and college classes. $14.95.

Some Ballad Folks - by Tom Burton. Pioneering study of traditional ballad singers from Beech Mountain, N.C. Book - $6.50, accompanying tape - $5.00.

One For The Higger: Jack Higgs, A Man For All Seasons - edited by Lyle I. Olsen. Festschrift - a collection of articles by Higgs' collegues, former students, and friends. $10.00.

In the Spirit of Adventure: A 1914 Smoky Mountain Hiking Journal - written by D.R. Beeson, Sr. Taken from the Beeson diaries in the Archives of Appalachia, edited by Norma Myers, Ned Irwin, and Charles Maynard. $7.95 paper, $12.95 cloth.

Recordings

DOWN AROUND BOWMANTOWN: PORTRAIT OF A MUSICAL COMMUNITY IN NORTHEAST TENNESSEE Features remastered non-commercial disc recordings made in the late 1930s and early 1950s in Washington County, Tenn. Side two features recent digital recordings of some of the same musicians. Extensive notes and photos. Selected by the Library of Congress as one of the best recordings of folk music in 1989. Available in album and cassette (Please specify). $10.00.

EAST TENNESSEE STATE BLUEGRASS BAND Features original recordings along with old favorites. First recording by any university bluegrass band anywhere. Available in album and cassette. $10.00 for cassette. *Special Album Sale* - $8.00.

Now & Then Magazine

Vol.(#)	Subject	Date	Cost
12 (1)	Environment	Spring 1995	$4.50
11 (3)	Celebrations & Rituals	Fall 1994	$4.50
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Membership in the center provides public recognition of your generosity and your support for our work in the Appalachian region. No matter what size the investment, a contribution to the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services through membership brings important returns. Your benefits of membership are:

- Members receive three issues of the center's magazine, ***Now & Then***, to keep you abreast of Appalachian issues and the best in Appalachian writing and photography.
- Members receive the center's newsletter, ***NewsCASS***, three times a year. Members are publicly acknowledged in the newsletter once each year.
- Members receive advance notice of workshops and special events sponsored by the center, prior to public release.
- Members receive special member rates and discounts on books, recordings, and other publications or productions, study tours, study abroad, conferences, and programs.

In addition, your membership provides the center with these benefits:

- Memberships help us conduct the center's multiple programs and projects in teaching, research, and service in the Appalachian region.
- Members have opportunities for participating in center projects as volunteers.

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❑ **CASS Student Associates** (for undergraduate and graduate students)	**$10**	
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❑ **CASS Patrons**	**$250**	or more
❑ **CASS Corporate Partners**	**$500**	or more

Donations in excess of $15 may be tax deductible.

Friends of the center are also encouraged to support specific programs with special funds already established for them.

YES! I'd like to make an additional contribution of $_____ to:

- ❑ Appalachian Studies Curriculum
- ❑ Appalachian-Scottish Studies Program
- ❑ Country and Bluegrass Music Program

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Archives and Special Collections

Members are invited to make donations of materials having historical and cultural significance for Southern Appalachia and its people, as well as financial contributions to the Archives of Appalachia Fund and to the Tom Daniels Memorial Fund (for archives media projects). For further information, phone (615) 929-4338 or write Archives and Special Collections, at the adress below.

❑ Archives of Appalachia Fund	Amount _____
❑ Tom Daniels Memorial Fund	Amount _____

Please make checks payable to the specific fund named and mail to Archives and Special Collections, ETSU Box 70665, Johnson City, TN 37614-0665.

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JACK HIGGS HONORED WITH LAUREL LEAVES AWARD

Dr. Jack Higgs, recently retired from the English faculty at East Tennessee State University, has been named as one of two recipients of this year's Laurel Leaves Award from the **Appalachian Consortium**. The consortium, a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to preserving the cultural heritage of Southern Appalachia, gives this annual award to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Southern Appalachia and the people of the region.

The Laurel Leaves Award is a sculptured relief of the laurel worked in aluminum, then hand painted and mounted on wormy chestnut and oak taken from an old barn in Avery County, N. C. Higgs will receive the award at the April 7th meeting of the consortium at Mars Hill College in North Carolina.

Higgs, nominated by the center, has a record of impressive accomplishments, particularly in the field of Appalachian literature. He is co-editor (with previous Laurel Leaves Award winner Ambrose Manning) of ***Voices from the Hills: Selected Readings of Southern Appalachia***, the most widely used anthology of Appalachian writing since its publication in 1967. The University of Tennessee Press has just published Higgs' *Appalachia Inside Out: A Sequel to Voices from the Hills* (in two volumes), co-edited with Manning and Jim Wayne Miller (also a Laurel Leaves winner).

Higgs has published articles on Appalachia for *Appalachian Journal*, *An Encyclopedia of East Tennessee*, *Appalachia/Appalachian Literature*, *Mossy Creek Journal*, and *Essays in Honor of Cratis Williams*. Just last year, Higgs was honored by the Appalachian Studies Association with the **Cratis Williams Award** for outstanding teaching and scholarship in Appalachian studies. He is widely known for his work on Appalachian humor, both as practitioner and scholar, having contributed to two books and several programs on the topic. His command of knowledge in many fields coupled with a great wit keeps him in high demand as a speaker.

All of us at ETSU are proud that Jack Higgs is our colleague. He gives unstintingly of his time and energy to students, colleagues, and our regional communities. Jack Higgs cares about learning, and he cares about the people of Appalachia. ◆

IN MEMORIAM

Everyone in the Appalachian Studies family mourns the death of **John Stephenson** on December 6, 1994. Throughout his entire academic career and especially during the years he served as president of Berea College in Kentucky, John influenced the development of Appalachian Studies and contributed to improvement of life in Appalachia in countless ways. He was mentor and friend to many people, including me.

When I was a young university professor, just becoming involved in Appalachian Studies, John always made me feel welcome. His bright smile, kind eyes, softly cadenced voice, and passionate commitment to Appalachia commanded presence in every Appalachian Studies gathering I attended and made me want to be like him. When we finally had an opportunity at Virginia Tech, where I taught for many years, to get grant money from the National Endowment for the Humanities for an Appalachian Studies program, John was a member of the site visitation team. We got our program. It changed the course of my life.

The last conversation I had with John was when

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Encyclopdia, continued from page 1

science correspondent, Pentagon correspondent, and White House correspondent. A native of Florence, Ala., he is a graduate of the University of Mississippi and attended Columbia University on a Sloan-Rockefeller Fellowship in Advanced Science Writing. In 1988-89, **Abramson** was the Mary and Barry Bingham Adjunct Professor at Berea College, during which time he wrote his biography of W. Averill Harriman, ***Spanning the Century***. Abramson currently serves as executive director of Protect Historic America, a national committee promoting historic preservation.

Several university presses have expressed interest in publishing the encyclopedia. The project will likely take five years to complete. In the next few months, the center will assemble the advisory committee and the senior editors for the project and develop the budget and funding for the project.

The center is asking anyone interested in contributing to the project to send a letter and short vita to the center office. We welcome ideas for topics that should be covered and suggestions for sources of financial support. ◆

News CASS

Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services / East Tennessee State University

Archives & Special Collections
A Division of Sherrod Library

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

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In Memoriam, continued from page 11

we shared a panel at the retirement party for Loyal Jones in Berea. I concluded my remarks with a quote from something John had written about our commitment to Appalachia some years earlier that I always loved. John wrote: "How many of us are there...who have made secret pledges to ourselves that *we will not forget* this time, that we will work in large or small ways, quietly or noisomely, for as long as we draw breath, to make some small difference in what is known about this place and improving life for the people of this place. And what an incalculable difference is made by this grand conspiracy, this community of pledged lives, this not-so-secret society of the committed." After the session, John asked me, "Did I write that? That's pretty good, isn't it?" Yes, John, it is good. It came from the heart of a good man. You will be missed.

—Jean Haskell Speer

CENTER FOR Appalachian STUDIES AND SERVICES

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East Tennessee State University
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In time, we realized that even though we had not succeeded in passing the legislation we wanted, we had drawn a lot of public attention to the issue. In fact, the next year Governor Caperton began taking heat from citizens concerned about the lack of groundwater protection. He responded by appointing the Governor's Groundwater Task Force, a 12-member committee of people representing industry, regulators, and environmentalists. Caperton instructed them to write a consensus groundwater protection bill which he himself would introduce in the 1991 session. Norm Steenstra, Cindy Rank of the WV Highlands Conservancy, Richard di Pretoro of Mountain Stream Monitors and I were the environmental representatives on the committee.

There were many grueling drafting meetings and major hurdles. The legislative session started before the Task Force had ironed out enough differences to draft a bill. At one point, when it seemed unlikely that we would get an acceptable non-degradation clause, the other environmentalists and I withdrew from the committee in protest to work on our own bill. This withdrawal, I believe, was key. The governor urged us to reconvene, and by that time, something had convinced industry to finish the deal. Finally, after six long months, the task force reached consensus which, not surprisingly, involved wins and losses for each side.

For example, we got our crucial non-degradation clause, but not our citizen suit provision. Industry got provisions that would allow for activities such as mining and gas development, activities that by their nature could not be done without impacting groundwater. These provisions, however, were qualified. Mining activities were already regulated by another statute which, if properly enforced, would protect groundwater. In addition, groundwater outside the natural gas production zone was still subject to non-degradation. For its efforts, the task force received an Award of Special Merit from the National Environmental Awards Council.

Waxing and Waning

As WVEC gained strength, through its growing membership, its diversity, and its successes, we gained recognition as the state's main environmental voice. A lot is now expected from us. When we expressed concern about the lack of environmental advocates on various state advisory committees, the state responded by tapping our members for a variety of positions, from the Public Service Commission to the Division of Environmental Protection Advisory Board.

Over our first five years, we have seen the strength of the environmental movement shift from one area of West Virginia to another — a healthy sign. A good example is the WVEC's Highlands Region in east-central West Virginia which contains much of the remote Monongahela National Forest. Initially, there were few environmental activists around Elkins in the northern part of this region.

As WVEC gained strength, through its growing membership, its diversity, and its successes, we gained recognition as the state's main environmental voice.

Then along came Appalachian Corridor H, a four-lane superhighway proposed from Buckhannon to Route 81 in Virginia. This highway is part of the 1960s federal highway plan of the Appalachian Regional Commission designed to increase access to remote areas of the Appalachians in the name of "economic development." Many area residents contend that the highway would threaten their quality of life and destroy the quiet, natural, unpolluted character of the region which makes the area so attractive. As a result, the Highlands Region now has one of the highest levels of activist energy in the state.

Unlike industry representatives and government regulators, we are typically volunteers. In fact when it's possible, we often take vacation time from our jobs to do WVEC work. We generally do our own research and typing because we lack adequate paid support staff. The playing field between environmentalists and industry interests appears far from level.

However, WVEC members often bring a strong commitment to the job, a more intense dedication than we would feel if we were being paid for what we do. A volunteer is usually driven by very personal motives, such as concern about air quality or a deep caring for the entire natural world. We put in those long, long hours because we feel deeply that what we are doing is vital. That often gives us an edge that money can't buy.

The time and extent of involvement of our many volunteers is as diverse as the collection of people themselves. When volunteers find that their part of the battle is over or when they are just plain exhausted, many retreat back to "normal" life. Some take a break after one major campaign, while others stay around for years, working on many issues and fighting many fights. "Burnout" comes and goes.

Keeping volunteers healthy by allowing them a break ensures that environmental activism can remain a renewable resource. But taking time off can be difficult to do. The phone calls don't stop, the mail keeps coming, and there can be serious guilt feelings. Eventually, however, you learn that your own health, both mental and physical, is important for the health of the whole group.

When an organization like WVEC is healthy, it can continue its actions on various environmental issues — even as the energies of individuals and groups wax and wane. In this way, the WVEC provides the necessary continuity and persistent effort to deal with the seemingly never-ending environmental issues facing West Virginia.

WVEC's challenge for the future is to keep moving forward with long-term policy initiatives while maintaining the advances we have made. Out of the more than 100 groups and the thousands of individuals who have connected with us over our first five years has evolved a strong network of dedicated activists. For example, Marta Steenstra, a Charleston high school student and Norm's daughter, has begun a statewide Sierra Student Coalition with its own newsletter. Politicians have felt the effects of West Virginia's environmental movement at the polls where candidates are forced to deal with

Please see **WVEC** *on page 29.*

Appalachian Environmental Organizations

Alabama

• The Bankhead Monitor
P. O. Box 117
Moulton AL 35650

Contact Person: Lamar Marshall, Exec. Dir.
Phone: 205-974-7678 (8 a.m. - 5 p.m., 7 days a week)

General Description, Issues & Activities: A forest watch group; publishes two magazines on national forests. Issues and activities include wilderness preservation; opposition to clear cutting, herbiciding lands and conversion of native forest to monoculture. Currently conducting the Bankhead Watershed Project to provide input into the 1996 Forest Plan Revision of the U.S. Forest Service.

Georgia

• Chattooga River Watershed Coalition
P.O. Box 2006
Clayton GA 30525

Contact Person: Buzz Williams, Exec. Dir.
Phone: 706-782-6097 (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Protecting, promoting, and restoring the natural ecological integrity of the Chattooga River watershed and educating and empowering communities to practice good stewardship on public and private lands. Activities include a petition for "interim protection" to the Regional Forester of the U.S. Forest Service to protect old growth/roadless areas and other critical habitat until new forest plans can be written based on "good science"; and organizing volunteer monitoring teams to track activities on Forest Service lands.

• Coosa River Basin Initiative
2887 Alabama Highway
Rome GA 30165

Contact Person: Jerry Brown, Exec. Dir.
Phone: 706-235-0131 (9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Working for a healthier Coosa River Basin. Activities include a citizen water monitoring program; assisting local & county government to develop environmentally sound policies; utilizing Clean Water Act to assist industries to become more environmentally aware; working on watershed value campaign; working to demonstrate the relationship between good economy and good environment.

We sent a survey to as many Appalachian environmental groups as we could find and asked them to pass it on. Here are the results.

• Friends of the Mountains
P. O. Box 368
Clayton GA 30525

Contact Person: Don Bundrick, President
Phone: 706-754-3310 (evenings)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Protecting the mountain counties of North Georgia. Issues & activities include forests; clean water; public education; revision of the current U.S. Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chattooga River watershed.

• The Rabun County Coalition to Save the Forests
Route 1, Box 1182
Clayton GA 930525

Contact Person: Bob Alexander, President
Phone: 706-782-6214

General Description, Issues & Activities: Working within the Tallulah District of the Chattahoochee National Forest. Activities include litigation against the Forest Service concerning Decision Notices and Environmental Assessments. Issues include timber cutting, burning, water, and erosion.

• Sierra Club - Georgia Chapter
1447 Peachtree St., NE, Suite 305
Atlanta GA 30309

Contact Person: Katie Van Brackel
Phone: 404-607-1262 (9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Ongoing issues include water, wetlands and wildlands protection; transportation improvement; solid waste reduction; land use planning; forest and ecosystem protection through education, legislation, and litigation.

• The Wilderness Society
1447 Peachtree Street, N.E., #812
Atlanta GA 30309

Contact Person: Peter C. Kirby, Southeast Regional Director
Phone: 404-872-9453

General Description, Issues & Activities: Uses wilderness designation and other means to protect publicly owned wildlands. Working on the new plan for the Cherokee National Forest and other national forests of the Southern Appalachians.

Kentucky

• ASPI (Appalachian Science in the Public Interest)
P. O. Box 298
Livingston KY 40445

Contact Person: Jack Kieffer
Phone: 606-453-2105 (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Promotes simple living and organic gardens in Appalachia; produces a Simple Lifestyle Calendar. Issues & activities include forest protection and sustainability; strip mining; artificial wetlands; appropriate technology; environmental assessments for organizations; water conservation and purification.

• KFTC (Kentuckians for the Commonwealth)
P. O. Box 174 Blackey Road
London KY 40741

Contact Person: Burt Lauderdale, Coord.
Phone: 606-878-2161 (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Deals with Kentucky's environmental issues including environmental effects of strip mining; removal of old growth forests and clear-cutting in the Daniel Boone National Forest; development of a Forest Management Plan, including management of privately logged lands; and forestry, oil, gas, coal, and waste issues.

Maryland

• Sierra Club Southern Appalachians
Ecoregion Task Force
69 Franklin Street
Annapolis MD 21401

Contact Person: Howard Ayers, Chair
Phone: 410-268-7411 (9 a.m. - 5 p.m., M-F)

General Description, Issues & Activities: A branch of the Sierra Club which includes the states of Ala., Ga., N.C., S.C., Tenn., W. Va., Va., Md., and Pa. Activities include restoration and protection of native biological diversity in the Southern Appalachian mountains.

North Carolina

• Southern Appalachian Biodiversity Project
P. O. Box 3141
Asheville NC 28802

Contact Person: Brownie Newman, Co-dir.
Phone: 704-258-2667 (M-F, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Works throughout the Southern Appalachian region on issues related to endangered wildlife and public lands including protection of national forests from logging and damage from off-road vehicle use; protection by litigation of endangered wildlife; prevention of large-scale mining in national forests; and elimination of subsidies for national forest logging.

• Southern Appalachian Mountains Initiative
The Interchange Building
59 Woodfin Place
Asheville NC 28801

Contact Person: Leslie Cox, Coordinator
Phone: 704-251-6889 or 6208 (M-F, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Voluntary consortium of government agencies, businesses, industries, environmental organizations, academia, and other groups in eight Southeastern states (Ala., Ga., Ky., N.C., S.C., Tenn., Va. and W. Va.). Recommends reasonable measures to remedy existing and to prevent future adverse effects from man-made air pollution on the Southern Appalachian Mountains' sensitive resources.

Tennessee

• Friends of the Clinch and Powell Rivers
P. O. Box 636
Sneedville TN 37869

Contact Person: Will E. Brickley, President
Phone: 615-733-2633 (Early a.m. or late p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Concerned with the Clinch and Powell River watersheds but concentrates on Hawkins and Hancock (Tenn.) Counties. Concerns include water quality of the Clinch and Powell Rivers and their tributaries; biological water monitoring in streams; solid waste issues such as landfills, incinerators, and recycling. Publishes a monthly newsletter.

• Foothills Land Conservancy
352 High Street
Maryville TN 37803

Contact Person: Randy Brown
Phone: 615-681-8326 (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Independent land trust dedicated to protecting the scenic and ecological resources of East Tennessee. Focuses on the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Issues include land conservation, open space and farmland preservation. Raising $1.3 million to purchase a 4,600 acre tract to be given to the Great Smoky Mountains NP and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to create a new wildlife management area. Plans to establish a buffer zone along the Tennessee side of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

• National Parks & Conservation Association
Southeast Regional Office
P. O. Drawer E
Norris TN 37828

Contact Person: Don Barger, Southeast Regional Director
Phone: 615-494-7008 (Days)

General Description, Issues & Activities: America's only private nonprofit citizens' organization dedicated solely to protecting, preserving, and enhancing the U. S. National Park system. Specific issues include regional air quality problems which are currently causing damage in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; inappropriate development along the Blue Ridge Parkway; opposes proposal to build an additional road access into the scenic gorge of the Big South Fork area; supports reintroduction of the red wolf into the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

• Roan Mountain Society
#4 Bingham Court
Johnson City TN 37604

Contact Person: Jeff G. Wardeska, President
Phone: 615-928-1638 (evenings)

General Description, Issues & Activities: No geographic limitations; no affiliations. Our goal is to provide information about issues (including environmental) affecting the Roan Mountain area. Working to incorporate the hack line trail to Carver's Gap into the U.S. Forest Service's system of trails; sponsors Science Fair award for the best project relating to the Southern Appalachian highlands.

• Sierra Club - State of Franklin Group
266 Mayberry Road
Jonesborough TN 37659

Contact Person: Linda C. Modica, Chair
Phone: 615-753-9697

General Description, Issues & Activities: One of six groups in the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club. Covers the entire Northeast Tennessee area. Concerned with community education on environmental issues, protection of the biodiversity of local forests and wilderness areas, and promotion of energy conservation to mitigate destruction of forest and air resources by power plant air pollution.

• Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning
130 Tabor Road
Oak Ridge TN 37830

Contact Person: Joan Burns or Linda Laforest, Co-Executive Directors
Phone: 615-481-0286 (10 a.m. - 3 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: An independent, statewide environmental organization dedicated to the care of Tennessee's natural environment. Its work led to the creation of the Big South Fork National Recreation & River Area and designation of the Obed as a National Wild and Scenic River. Currently fighting construction of new golf courses in state parks; promoting regional watershed planning; lobbying for appropriation funds for land acquisition in the Big South Fork and Obed; and promoting sustainable forestry practices.

Vermont

• American Chestnut Foundation
P.O. Box 4044
Bennington, VT 05201

Contact Person: Rachael Kelly. John Herrington, Exec. Dir.

Phone: 802-447-0110

General Description, Issues & Activities: The foundation's sole goal is to restore the American chestnut tree to the landscape. Issues & activities include publication of a newsletter and journal; funds and conducts breeding research and affiliated research to create an American chestnut hybrid that will be 98% American chestnut and 2% other species so it can resist the blight.

Virginia

• Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition
201 W. Main Street, #14
Charlottesville VA 22902

Contact Person: David Carr, Chair, Steering Committee
Phone: 804-977-4090 (9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Comprised of nine environmental groups joined in a four-year effort to protect the native biological diversity of public lands in the Southern Appalachians. Currently developing data to support creation of conservation zones; protecting vital components of biological diversity through legal and administrative action; educating decision-makers about threats to forest resources; establishing a conservation zone in the Chattooga Watershed; seeking public support for permanent protection of key biological, scenic, and recreation resources.

• • • • •

• **Southern Environmental Law Center**
201 W. Main Street, #14
Charlottesville VA 22902

Contact Person: David Carr, Staff Attorney
Phone: 804-977-4090 (9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: A nonprofit advocacy organization working to protect public health and the environment in a six-state region (Ala., Ga., N.C., S.C., Tenn. and Va.) by providing legal representation to state and local groups to address site-specific abuses of natural resources and critical natural areas. Past activities include setting a national precedent that all national parks and wilderness areas are entitled to strict protection from air pollution. Current activities include playing a leadership role in a four-year, regionwide coalition campaign to create a system of permanently protected conservation zones in Southern Appalachian national forests; helping to steer environmental groups, industry, and state and federal regulatory agencies toward creating strategies to reduce air pollution in the Southern Appalachians.

• **Virginians for Wilderness**
Route 1, Box 250
Staunton VA 24401

Contact Person: Robert F. Mueller

General Description, Issues & Activities: A Central Appalachian umbrella group. Issues and activities include forest issues (national and state forests); opposition to roads and highways such as Corridor H and Route 58; legal action against the U. S. Forest Service; establishment of Wilderness Preserves and Legislation to propose a "Central Appalachian Ecosystem Protection Act."

• **Virginia Wilderness Committee**
95 Hope Street
Harrisonburg VA 22801

Contact Person: Lynn Cameron, President
Phone: 703-434-1318 (evenings, weekends)

General Description, Issues: & Activities: A citizens' group dedicated to the preservation of outstanding wild areas on public land in Virginia through congressional wilderness designations.

West Virginia

• **Corridor H Alternatives**
P. O. Box 11
Kerens WV 26276

Contact Person: Hugh Rogers, Secretary
Phone: 304-636-2662 (Any time)

General Description, Issues & Activities: A coalition opposed to construction of the Corridor H Superhighway between Elkins, W. Va., and Strasburg, Va.; maintains offices in Kerens, New Creek, and Wardensville, W. Va., and Lebanon Church, Va. Activities include commenting on Corridor H's environmental impact statement, working to cut its funding, and publicizing its high cost and minimal economic benefits. Will expand to promote sensible transportation planning for the West Virginia Potomac Highlands and Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

• **Greenbrier River Watershed Association**
P. O. Box 1419
Lewisburg WV 24901

Contact Person: Mark Blumenstein
Phone: 304-445-7822

General Description, Issues & Activities: A grass-roots group of about 300 members concentrating on the future health of the Greenbrier River and its tributaries. Activities include opposition to proposed Army Corps of Engineers dam on river; conducting a five-year baseline study of river's health. Concerned with agricultural and development problems, including enforcement of existing regulations; logging, sediment, and pollution control.

• **Harrison County ECO**
P. O. Box 2113
Clarksburg WV 26302

Contact Person: Matt Evans, President
Phone: 304-783-5307 (after 6 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Deals with environmental issues in Harrison County, W. Va. Past activities included promoting recycling; presenting programs on environmental issues and enforcing the results of a referendum on landfill expansion. Current activities include monitoring legislative actions, planning Earth Week programs; advocating chlorine-free pulp mills in West Virginia; and presenting programs on acid mine drainage and wind power. Future plans include developing recommendations on land use planning.

• **The Mountain Institute**
(formerly Woodlands Mountain Institute)
Main & Dogwood
Franklin WV 26807

Contact Person: Jane Pratt, CEO & President
Phone: 304-358-2401 (Wed. & Thurs., 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

General Description, Issues & Activities: A not-for-profit educational, scientific, and action organization with a 400-acre teaching campus in Franklin, W. Va. In addition to West Virginia, it has divisions in the Himalayas and the Andes. Promotes worldwide partnerships that create innovative and sustainable solutions to global mountain problems. Activities include providing technical assistance to mountain peoples working to create a better life for themselves while taking care of the environment.

• **Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition**
1101 Sixth Avenue, Room 225
Huntington, WV 25701

Contact person: Dianne Bady, Director
Phone: 304-522-0246 (Late mornings)

General Description, Issues & Activities: Coalition covers the Tri-State (Ohio, W. Va., Ky.) region along the Ohio River. Promoting least polluting technologies at paper mill proposed for Apple Grove, W. Va.; working to get responsible chemical emergency plan for Kenova, W. Va.; promoting sustainable forest cutting in region; kept BASF toxic waste incinerator out of area; concerned with improving air quality.

• **Solar Age Press**
Box 610
Peterstown WV 24963

Contact Person: Jack Frazier

General Description, Issues & Activities: Ecology, natural fiber publisher; editor/publisher of *Solar Age Hemp Paper Report.* Issues and activities include promoting and distributing tree-free paper; fighting Apple Grove Paper Mill on Ohio River in West Virginia and the Appalachian Power Company through Virginia and West Virginia.

• **Southern Appalachian Labor School**
P. O. Box 127
Kincaid WV 25119

Contact Person: John David, Director;
Sue Workman, Environmental Coordinator
Phone: 304-595- 2358

General Description, Issues & Activities: Concentrates on West Virginia environmental issues, with an emphasis on the mid- and southern counties. Issues include PCBs; toxic dumps; wood products.

• **West Virginia Highlands Conservancy**
P.O. Box 306
Charleston WV 25337

Contact Person: Richard di Pretoro
Phone: 304-296-8963, M-F, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

General Description, Issues & Activities: West Virginia corporation working to protect the natural resources and the natural areas of the state. Special emphasis on the Monongahela National Forest/Highlands Region. Concerned with surface and ground water quality, coal mining regulation and timbering practices. Increasing focus on wilderness, biodiversity and timbering of national forest and other public lands.

— compiled by Janet Hearne

Janet Hearne is an English major with a minor in journalism at ETSU. She is a student assistant with Now & Then.

Aging Architecture

A Defense of the Mountain Cabin

by Sharon K. Turnbull

Is the mountain cabin an overused stereotype? Yes, but . . .

There you were, two usually even-tempered authors, "fit to be tied" because some Yankee publishers decked out both your books with the same old stereotyped covers they always seem to use when something comes from Appalachia.

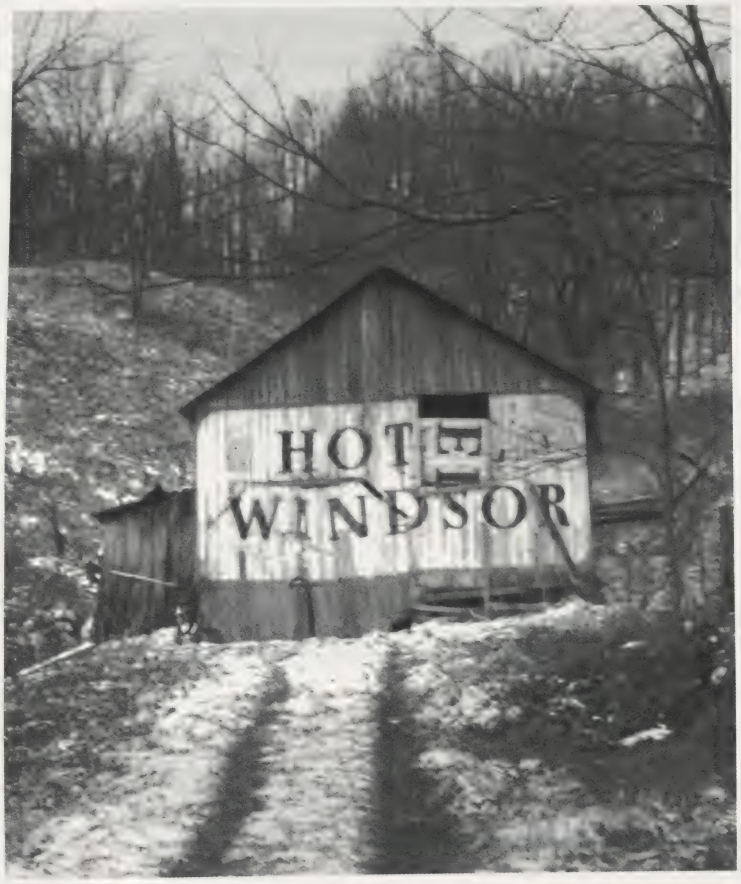
I heard the disdain in your voices, the despair. You could just see a painter in some warehouse studio lit by the northern light (no doubt fluorescent) of New York City, eyes looking inward to the imagined mountains and the decrepit cabin, the rustic mountain home. You see the artist, almost as an afterthought, deftly brushing in a family, impoverished but proud. After all, artists *are* humanists!

No doubt Flannery O'Connor wouldn't have wanted those book covers either. In a letter to a friend, the Georgia author complained that a recent newspaper article had been accompanied by a picture "designed to make us look like poor white trash." Posed with a neighbor's derelict house "in the background and no notation that I didn't live in it — me looking gimlet-eyed out across what must be a hogwaller — me feeding some geese. Anyway, my mail for the last two weeks has been from rural Georgia. . . . All these letters are from people I might have made up. I don't want to get any nearer to them than in the imagination either. . . ."

As a symbol, the mountain cabin has become a visual cliché. Like all metaphors, it falls apart, failing to say enough. Perhaps those of us who feel the mean insult when forced to view that image, time and time again, experience the opening of a wound. With good reason, we suspect the outside world is too unwilling, too uninterested, to look beyond. Perhaps, instead, we need to think more deeply about the image of the weathered swayback barn, the isolated cabin in the woods, the empty and abandoned storefront. Why do they appear with monotonous regularity on calendars and postcards, in so many images of Appalachia? What explains their popularity?

To the painter, the explanation is simple. In the words of Danish writer Isak Dinesen, the cabin preserves "the charm of remoteness, reverie and decay of the place . . . harmoniously tuned into the harmony of the whole." Modern buildings have no such appeal. Concrete, vinyl, and aluminum siding do not age well. They don't "grow" attractive or interesting, only ugly. Like the writer, the painter is on what recently retired East Tennessee State University English professor Jack Higgs has called a "search for the usable past, a quest for meaning and identity." Robert Bateman, arguably North America's foremost wildlife painter and an ardent environmentalist, asserts that "there are more reasons than simple preservation for protecting the wild places we have left and making more human the man-made environments we have constructed."

Is it possible that these clapboard shanties do in fact make Appalachia's man-made environment more human, that they are an adequate, even beautiful, metaphor for the life of Appalachia? What values of Appalachian life are suggested by the simple, rustic cabin set in the mountains? The tutored eye can find many — love of landscape (someone chose this site, and certainly not for its convenience), a keen eye for what "belongs" and a reluctance to despoil the environment, courage in the face of adversity, self-sufficiency (including the ability to enjoy the company of one's self with little need for urbane attractions), the craft to build



Charles L. Callahan

One of many old outbuildings sporting an advertisement for the Hotel Windsor, once located in Johnson City, Tenn.

one's home, individuality, respect for the integrity of function. Most significantly, the image gives honor to the past.

In reality, these aging architectures are fast disappearing from the landscape. Like the Appalachian character itself, they have numerous deadly adversaries of which time and neglect, combined with the elements, are the most devastating. Blizzards, floods, fires, falling trees, and erosion serve as perpetual reminders that, in the face of nature's force, the work of man is frail indeed.

Appalachians are often bemused by the willingness of urban folk to live among the vandals and the thieves. Yet, in the name of economic growth, we have naively welcomed kindred spirits into our midst.

As buildings become unprofitable and taxes soar, economic forces demand that a building pay its way. Ironically, modern carpetbaggers, collectors, and antique dealers who service a growing market for nostalgia, have gutted many storehouses of their memories, leaving only empty clearings in their place. The beautiful surfaces of weathered wood and ancient brick have made them the quarry of contractors who will often willingly demolish a structure free of charge. The salvage itself, once it is fashioned into coffee tables for some urban penthouse, will more than recover the cost.

Neither is progress, with its burgeoning energy requirements, the friend it pretends to be. A single hydroelectric project relocates a score of communities to the bottom of a lake, their architecture to be appreciated by the bass.

Then there are those who disfigure property not of their own heritage, creating incongruities that mar the view to and from their summer homes — mailboxes of the Ralph Lauren Shoppe and Buford's Sundries and Appliance Repair stand side by side. The pop culture of the big city is strangely intrusive. Somehow it seems much uglier in rural areas.

Concrete, vinyl, and aluminum siding do not age well. They don't "grow" attractive or interesting, only ugly.

Most find old weathered buildings visually pleasing, not simply because the structures are picturesque and quaint. They provide some sense of security and simplicity, a touch with one's roots, actual or desirously imagined. But they also have qualities that transcend all of this for they embody the essence of a resourceful lifestyle. Built with simple tools for simple, functional purposes, they contain no expensive whimsies, like diverting the creek to run through the solarium. Bred in the bones of every Appalachian is the knowledge that the creek will run through it in its own good time. These edifices were personal undertakings. No two were crafted alike — no architects, professional decorators, or franchise floor plans here. Each is a unique folk sculpture.

And the seasons and the generations have added their own adornments. The red paint covers green which covers white, but the sun strips them all, leaving eye-catching splotches of each, and finally, only the brown stain. The land sinks, and the beams bend — the barn sags, now depending on the kudzu for support. Part of a roof, collapsed by the heavy snow, is replaced with new materials, at no cost if the owner will allow it to recommend the "Windsor Hotel — Five Miles Ahead." Upon each aging structure is writ a story waiting to be told.

For these weathered buildings are monuments to the past, to moments of laughter and lust, to grief, childbirth, and death. They are all that remain of a family, a childhood, a way of life. The people have gone — scattered or dead — but the buildings remain, the last physical evidence. When they too go, then it will be as a grave without a stone.

Where will the memory live?

Sharon Turnbull describes herself as a nomadic scholar. She is clinical associate professor of psychiatry at the Quillen College of Medicine and serves as interim director of student health services at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn.

What the Moon Knows
Fall Equinox, 1993

Like the rest
I'm out
of balance
this Equinox.

I see too many red lights
and too few sunrises.
I sit for too much of the Evening News
and not enough of the wren's.
I work too hard,
love too little.

But the moon knows
its light equals
its dark.

And I'm learning.

— Jim Minick

Jim Minick teaches at Radford University.

Tree of Fire

One autumn morning, long ago, I saw a tree of fire.

I used to imagine my father, but I never did so with any blame, any rancor. As for my mother, I had ceased blaming her by the time I saw that tree. I didn't pity myself. It's important for me to recall these feelings exactly, in order to recapture my exact state of mind that autumn morning.

I had come to live with a man I called "Mr. Szol" (for his name was Szolasski). Life there was not bad, I realized even at that early age. I had seen others my age being beaten, going hungry, turned out dirty or ill-clothed, or even given up to spend their young days in the mines or the quarries. The year was 1918, and I was seven years old.

Szol had picked me out of a line of children formed up when the eastbound "Orphan Train" stopped at Thurmond, West Virginia. I had some vague impression of a most horrible fate awaiting any children who weren't chosen before the train arrived in Norfolk.

On the ride across country, we orphans were kept in a separate car, but soldiers in their drab and khaki doughboy uniforms often walked through, passing bottles back and forth and laughing. The countryside whirred past us orphans like a dream.

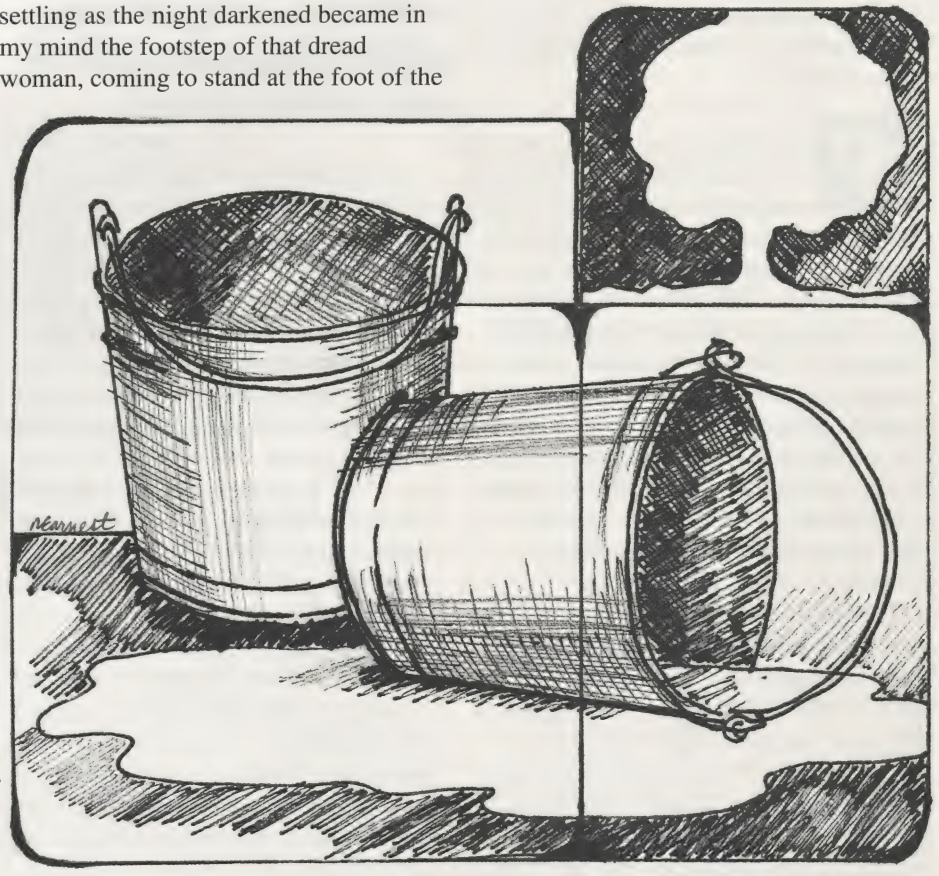
On the ride back from Thurmond, Szol had told me, as we bounced along in his wagon, that he once had a wife, but that she had died giving birth to what would have been their first child.

I was petrified. The farmhouse was a simple five rooms, a wooden frame on a foundation of stone, and seemed tremendous to me. Any of the niceties of a country house must have been the work of that dead wife and were either long since put away or put out of mind as frivolous. For example, there were samplers of counted cross-stitch hanging on the walls, showing scenes such as frame homes surrounded by flowers and plants which stretched up to a smiling sun. These pictures were covered along the tops of their frames with layers of dust. In a certain corner, dried flowers rustled in a porcelain vase. In my mind (even at that young age — how I must have understood death and loss!) I could see Szol's woman putting the flowers there and him not being able to remove them after she died. I hated lying within sight of those samplers, and crept past those dry flowers as if I were in the presence of an ancient spirit.

Perhaps such feelings were what first drove me away. Mr. Szol was less of a real person to me than this wife he had mentioned, and I expected to see her spirit walking through the house at any minute. Every creak and pop of the house settling as the night darkened became in my mind the footstep of that dread woman, coming to stand at the foot of the bed to look at me, or worse yet to reach down and place her grave-dried hand on my forehead. I pictured her wearing a simple print dress and a severe black scarf, carrying a bundle in her arms (the child).

When I could take no more, I slipped out from between the sheets and took up my clothes and shoes. I wasn't quite sure where Szol's bed was in relation to mine, but I knew where the kitchen door was. I crept to the door wincing with every squeak of the floorboards, expecting them to waken the dead, or at least Mr. Szol.

There is no way to describe the care with which I opened that kitchen door. I watched a slight shadow cast by the crystal blue moon creep over the width of an entire floorboard as I pulled the door



by Charles M. Saplak

wide enough to slip through, to freedom.

I didn't bother to shut the door behind me, and as I crept away from the house, I kept turning to look, expecting Mr. Szol to explode through. I had put enough distance between myself and the house to feel confident enough to sit down and put on my shoes, when a coarse cold hand reached out and grabbed me by the neck.

"Ho, boy, ho," said Mr. Szol. "You're headed the wrong way. What you're looking for's out back of the house, you know that."

He had been out walking in the darkness. He looked down at me and saw that I was carrying my clothes. "Oh, no, boy, no. Don't be that way. You'll end up back on the orphan train again, or worse. You don't want that."

That was the first time he ever touched me. Maybe I had expected a thrashing as a matter of course. I knew that I was better off in the black dirt of Szol's farm in the sunlight than I would be in the flint or coal. I went back to the bed and turned my attention to the walls papered with old newsprint, picking out scattered pictures of Thimble Theatre and the Katzenjammers, wondering what the words meant.

We worked.

From my first day there, I may not have been worthy of instructions, or even of heavy loads, but I was made to understand that I was expected to be at Szol's elbow all day and to lend my back to whatever share of the burden I could, and to watch and learn. I was made to understand that my place at the table and my clean bed were somehow earned by my presence in the fields. By that autumn, I was carrying slop to the hogs, feeding chickens and gathering eggs, toting milk pail by pail to the kitchen.

The old man had once told me that he'd come over nearly a decade before from the Hungarian Empire. I had the childish impression that he had escaped that place, and that he could only stay free by working the soil of his farm. I had a vague feeling that a lack of rain or an attack of locusts or weevils would send him back to that prison and put me on the orphan train to Norfolk.

That autumn morning I trudged up the hill to the barn at Szol's heels, chewing on a salty piece of bacon wrapped between a folded piece of stale bread. (God! Is it right that a man can still remember, still taste his breakfast seventy-nine years ago and not remember the names of any of the women he's had in his life?) There were still a few stars visible in the west, while gray dawn gave us some little light with which to negotiate over the ground. The chill in the air that morning made my eyes tear and gave me a sharp numbness in my nose and my cheeks. I remember wishing that I had gloves.

I was made to understand that my place at the table and my clean bed were somehow earned by my presence in the fields. By that autumn, I was carrying slop to the hogs, feeding chickens and gathering eggs, toting milk pail by pail to the kitchen.

In the barn, the old man shooed away the cats. We always had a dozen or so underfoot, and Szol was stingy about feeding them, probably in the hope that he could make them more terrible on the mice. Some mourning dove or barn pigeon was cooing in the rafters.

The old man spat in his hands and rubbed his palms together before he took the teats in hand. One of his three cows used to try to prance and crowd him as soon as she heard the stool and pail scrape on the floor beside her. Szol would rock backwards, then crack his forehead into her ribs to calm her.

As each pail filled, he would hand them to me to carry down the hill to our kitchen. As I left the barn that morning, I noticed that the sun had risen and was casting long shadows toward the house. A sliver of gray smoke rose from the stovepipe. The grass was stiffened with a slight frost and crunched beneath my feet.

Suddenly I saw it, and it was as if I'd glanced through an open doorway into a world beyond this one. Standing between me and the farmhouse was the most ideal maple tree in the world. It was seventy-five feet tall and was topped with a perfectly symmetrical crown, the branches spread outward in an uncanny expression of reaching. I was awestruck by the simple and miraculous fact that the tree was so firmly knuckled into the earth (the black dirt to which Szol and I were tied) with the semi-exposed roots characteristic of maples, yet was able to reach up into the very sky.

Even with my quiet ways and overactive imagination, I had never even noticed the tree which stood between the barn and the farmhouse before that morning, yet suddenly I was captivated by it. How could such a thing happen?

The turning of leaves in autumn (I have since learned) is a complex interplay of temperature, rainfall, and angle and duration of light. The tree had, overnight, gone from a vague rustiness to an appearance of cosmic and unquenchable fire. Within the scales of orange, red, and yellow, the maple had somehow managed to capture and express infinities of tone and chroma. At that single moment of that cold morning, the metal pail handles creasing my palms, I looked up and truly *saw*.

It's possible that at one of the various orphanages or mission homes, I had heard one of the Bible tales of a God who manifested itself as a burning bush to speak to one of its servants. That morning, as sun warmed the air into a slight breeze which rustled the leaves of fire, I couldn't be blamed if I, too, heard commands.

Of course, I dropped the pails of milk.

I don't know how long I stood there before Szol came stepping up behind me, himself carrying two pails, seeing what had apparently happened and saying, "Good God A-Mighty, Goddamned boy!"

The spell was broken. I looked down to where the bluish stuff was soaking into the mud around my shoes, then looked up into his weathered and timeworn face. The sky behind him was deep, hollow gray. I expected a beating and began to cry, for the first time there.

Szol set down his buckets and sat down on the frosty ground. He slumped over somewhat. He rocked back and forth a little and said, "Oh, I miss her, I miss

her, and I miss that boy."

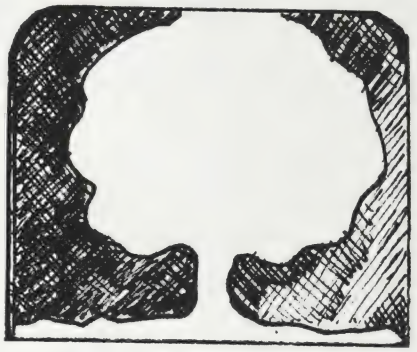
Almost as suddenly as he had sat, he stopped speaking and looked at me again. He jabbed his fingers into the milky mud and then raised them to his mouth. He licked them, then reached out with his other hand and brushed my wet cheeks, touched my chin and forehead.

"We don't worry about this, no we don't. We'll make do, yes we will." His voice was matter-of-fact.

He gave me one of the full buckets, and we set off toward the house. He grabbed my shoulder as we walked, the last time he touched me. I didn't attempt to explain what I had seen, and he let the matter drop.

This particular part of the story ends on an inevitably sad note. I went to bed that night with the tree still emblazoned in my memory, and fell asleep thinking of it. The next morning I fairly rushed out of the house, eager to see that it was still there, that it hadn't simply been my imagination.

Overnight there had been a true cold snap, as well as some chill rain. Just in that one night, the tree turned dull and ashen and had dropped more than half its



leaves, becoming a wooden-knuckled skeleton.

And we continued to work.

All the rest of my life remains only as vague dates or dead experiences, things I know happened, but which I recall without emotion. The various landmark events — when the bank took his farm a few years later, when he put a shotgun in his mouth a few days after that, my years on the iron road, eventually learning to read, the burning smell of World War II, these things are mere facts, and are less and less real to me with time's passage.

So why does my memory give me that autumn, that day, that maple, and refuse me so much else? I have many occasions to walk these days, although I can move but slowly. My mills and mines and properties run themselves, like clocks set in motion to outlive their makers. I am not hindered by family or friends. I often move among these hills and forests, and I often look at the trees and allow myself the luxury of trying to remember that particular color, that rustling, that particular reach of the crown of branches. My step is slower, my breath is constantly labored, and my eyesight is clouded. Still, I look for that maple.

This autumn is crisp and sharp, the kind of season that promises a brutal winter.

Perhaps this year I shall find it.

Charles M. Saplak has published stories in numerous magazines and anthologies, including Year's Best Horror 22, Science Fiction Age, *and* Tomorrow Speculative Fiction. *He currently lives in Radford, Va., with his wife Karen and daughter Charlene.*

Barger, ***from page 6.***

cooperation among all the major parties affected by an environmental question or issue, preferably before that question or issue has turned into a knotty problem. "That's why we're doing what we're doing on the Coalition for the Blue Ridge Parkway. Let's get everyone together. If a consortium of environmentalists, government agencies, tourism people, business leaders, and local government people came to you as a politician and said, 'I think we ought to do this,' you'd jump on that so quick. Politicians would love to have those kinds of solutions."

Barger has few illusions about the future of endeavors such as the Blue Ridge Parkway or SAMI. "It's going to be really tough," he allows. "Those are going to be hard rows to hoe."

Jane Harris Woodside is assistant director of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services and edits Now & Then.

WVEC, ***from page 21.***

environmental issues — and sometimes win or lose because of them. Drawing on information from WVEC members, Public Broadcasting System's WNPB-TV of Morgantown recently established a computer bulletin board on the environment which is available to the public. WVEC also has had a regular commentator on West Virginia Public Radio.

Shades of Green

Over WVEC's five-year history, we have learned several lessons. One is that a group can greatly enhance its effectiveness by being part of a broad-based coalition while maintaining its own identity. Another very important lesson that is often painful to learn is that people come in many "shades of green," referring to the *perceived* strength and depth of their positions on environmental issues. Being able to be respectful to all, recognizing that each has something to contribute in her or his own way, helps avoid the turf battles that so often tear coalitions apart. We have also learned that decision-making by consensus after lots of brainstorming is a healthy and non-confrontational means of interaction that promotes good feelings and inclusiveness among a diverse group such as WVEC.

Finally, and probably most importantly, we always let ourselves have fun. Whether we're hard at work in Charleston or we've gathered together for our annual spring WVEC meeting, which always takes place in Monongahela National Forest's wild Appalachian mountains, we escape and play together. It renews the spirit, our most important resource.

Mary J. Wimmer, an activist with the West Virginia Chapter of Sierra Club, is professor of biochemistry at West Virginia University School of Medicine; currently she does research on the environmental fate of pesticides used for gypsy moth control.

"I Thought the Whole World Was Going to Die"

The Story of the American Chestnut

by Margaret Lynn Brown and Donald Edward Davis

More and more these days, we find ourselves hiking in search of human and natural history. We want to know who lived here and how long ago they cut these pines. Sometimes we still reach our destination, in spite of all the time we take to stop and ponder, but after we've come back from the trail, our hikes linger on for days as we try to reconstruct *the whole story* of all that we've seen in the mountains.

Several times over the past three years, we have come across an extra large stump by the side of the trail. Five feet in diameter and an ancient-looking ghost gray color, the wood of the stump separates slightly into large, brick-like shapes. "Chestnut," we whisper. This tree is a story all by itself.

Few people alive today remember what the Southern Appalachian forests looked like with chestnut trees in them. "This is an unbelievable thing: how many chestnuts there were," remembers Paul Woody, who grew up in Cataloochee, N.C. Yet these enormous trees once comprised 25 percent of the Eastern hardwood forest. William MacDonald, professor of plant pathology at West Virginia University in Morgantown, estimates that chestnut-dominated forests once covered 200-million acres of land from Maine to Georgia.

Early 16th century Spanish explorers actually thought the chestnut tree was the characteristic tree of the Southern Appalachians. "Where there be mountains, there be chestnuts," one of them wrote in a diary. According to Harriet Simpson Arnow, early settlers on the Cumberland Plateau marveled at the sight of chestnut trees in the spring. Entire mountainsides became a sea of white blossoms.

Although 19th century people cut the giant trees for homes and tan bark, in 1897 forester Gifford Pinchot documented large chestnut stands across the Southern Appalachians and individual trees 13 feet across, with crowns spreading more than 120 feet above the forest floor. Each fall, children who lived in the mountains scooped up chestnuts by the sackful, hung their cloth bags on nails outside the door, and ate nuts until about Christmas time. Some families gathered bushels of chestnut and took them by the wagonload to regional markets.

Only ghost-like stumps remain where towering chestnuts once stood.

Most importantly, turn-of-the-century mountain people used chestnuts to feed their hogs. For a month or two each fall, farmers let hogs run in the woods to fatten on chestnut mast. When cold weather set in, the hogs were rounded up for slaughter. Chestnut-flavored meat then hung in the smokehouse all winter.

The American chestnut also ranked as the most important wildlife plant of the Eastern United States. Many of the species that mountain people and Cherokees thought of as game — squirrels, wild turkey, white-tailed deer, bear, and grouse — in turn depended on chestnuts. "Back when there were chestnuts, bear got so fat they couldn't run fast; now the poor bear run like a fox," exclaims Maynard Ledbetter, a former Cades Cove, Tenn., resident.

The lumber barons who cut their way through the Eastern forests during the early 20th century took most of the giant chestnut trees. Foresters at that time believed that the tall, fast-growing trees would eventually regenerate across the land. But instead, events thousands of miles away determined the chestnut tree's fate.

In 1904, a forester at the New York Zoological Park first noticed an immense number of dead and dying chestnut trees on the land he supervised. It took five years for the first general bulletin to appear about a disease new to science, a fungus later named *Cryphonectria parasitica.* Clinging to nursery stock imported from China, the fungus was first introduced into New York around the turn of the century. Microscopic seed-like spores from the fungus germinated in the trees and sent fine threads called mycelium into the inner bark, killing each cell invaded. In the summer, these cankers exuded sticky masses like toothpaste from a tube, sticking to the feet of birds, insects, animals, and human beings, all of whom carried the fungus farther into the forest.

A year after the bulletin came out, *Southern Lumberman* first referred to a "mysterious blight" in Pennsylvania and New York. "Large timbered sections of [Pennsylvania] are already and in an alarming manner affected by the disease," the report said. By 1912, all the chestnut trees in New York City were dead, and the chestnut blight had reached 10 states. Frantic scientists in Pennsylvania launched a vigorous control program, which included burning dead trees, monitoring the disease's advance, and spraying the cankers. This effort, a scientist later commented, was a little like using toy swords to battle an enemy equipped with atomic bombs. Yet foresters told the public that "the control and ultimate extermination of [chestnut blight] . . . will sooner or later become a real accomplishment."

Refusing to heed the foresters' confident predictions, the relentless disease spread south at an astounding rate of some 50 miles per year. Aided by woodsmen who carried it on their shoes and axes, the blight first entered North Carolina near Stokes and Surry counties in the

northwestern part of the state about 1913. By 1925, the American chestnut in the Smokies was doomed, though it still showed few signs of the blight.

In the 1920s, North Carolina lumbermen used the disease as a last-ditch effort to defeat the proposed Great Smoky Mountains National Park. "Certainly nothing could be more unsightly than the gaunt and naked trunks of these dead trees, standing like skeletons in every vista which the eye turns," they wrote. The lumbermen's concern masked their true motives, as they knew that a chestnut tree was worth money — dead or alive. The blight could not be stopped, but foresters determined quite early that because the wood retained its sap for so long, it was possible to manufacture lumber from a dead standing chestnut for anywhere from four to 10 or more years after the death of the tree. In the 1960s, Reuben Robertson, president of Champion Fibre, estimated that the company cut chestnut trees for 20 years after the blight arrived. Eventually, "the pulp yield decreased," he said, and "then synthetic tannin materials came in, and the price dropped."

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Caroline Walker Shelton (left) and her children were photographed by Jim Shelton at the base of a dead chestnut in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, circa 1925.

The lumbermen were right, however, about the dead white chestnut skeletons that began to fill the landscape during the Great Depression. "Man, I had the awfulest feeling about that as a child, to look back yonder and see those trees dying," Joe Tribble, a Dayhoit, Ky., resident recalls. "I thought the whole world was going to die."

"The worst thing that ever happened in this country was when the chestnut trees died," said Walter Cole. "Turkeys disappeared, and the squirrels were not one-tenth as many as there were before." Although Cole was not the only one to notice such losses, it would be difficult to separate how many animals disappeared because intensive logging practices eliminated their habitat and how many were lost because of the chestnut blight.

What is fair to say is that deer, bear, squirrels, turkeys, and songbird populations in unlogged, old growth areas did diminish during the late 1920s and early 1930s. And the loss of the chestnut probably slowed the recovery of wildlife already suffering from loss of habitat due to logging operations. Several unusual species of moths that relied upon chestnut trees probably became extinct or were greatly reduced as a result of the blight. James M. Hill, a biologist at Randolph-Macon College in Lynchburg, Va., ascribes the slow recovery of wild turkey, goshawks, Cooper's hawks, cougar, and bobcat in part to this further destruction of an important food source. Unlike other nut-bearing trees, chestnuts bore fruit annually and at far greater yields than the oaks and hickories that replaced them.

Even after they died, chestnut stumps became legendary. One of the first rangers at the new Great Smoky Mountains National Park recorded a chestnut tree nine feet, eight inches in diameter at a point six feet off the ground. "The hollow portion is so large that [an adult] could stand up in it," wrote the ranger who discovered it. "This hollow runs more than 50 feet up the trunk and at its narrowest point is not less than 3 feet. This must be the tree of which I heard. A man lost some stock during a snowstorm and later found them safe in a hollow chestnut tree."

In the 50 years since the last giant American chestnut tree died, the species has not actually become extinct because young trees sometimes sprout from the stump. At times the tree will even live long enough to produce chestnuts before it succumbs to the blight. In addition, individuals have occasionally discovered hypovirulent or isolated trees that have developed some natural resistance. Several researchers have tried, so far without success, to reproduce hypovirulent trees. Other researchers seek to backcross the American chestnut with Asian chestnut trees to regenerate a resistant species that remains genetically similar to the American tree. Within a dozen or so years, organizations such as the Bennington, Vt.-based American Chestnut Foundation may be able to start restoration projects.

In the mean time, introduced diseases, called "exotics," continue to threaten the Eastern forests. The gypsy moth, the Southern pine beetle, and the balsam woolly adelgid have also altered the forest, despite control measures taken by the National Forest Service and the National Park Service. And a whole host of new diseases, including dogwood anthracnose, beech bark disease, butternut canker, hemlock woolly adelgid, and an unknown black gum disease entered the United States during the 1980s on nursery stock.

"The devastation of the American chestnut by the chestnut blight represents one of the greatest recorded changes in natural plant population caused by an introduced organism," says MacDonald. As we try to re-imagine what our Southern mountains once looked like, the gravity of MacDonald's words begins to sink in.

Margaret Lynn Brown and Donald Edward Davis were historical consultants for Hiking Trails of the Smokies *(reviewed on page 38). Davis is writing an environmental history of the Southern Appalachians,* Where There Be Mountains, *and Brown is currently completing* Smoky Mountain Story: A Chronicle of Twentieth Century Environmental Change, *based partly on research she did as a 1994 Center for Appalachian Studies and Services Fellow.*

The Day the Hawks Flew

by Arthur S. Smith

A gloomy, overcast day in late September of 1982 found three of us huddled around the old fire tower on Clinch Mountain above Mendota, Virginia. We sat on the bare sandstone outcrops, enveloped in fog, with the nearby microwave relay station humming away.

This was the time and this was the place to see migrating broadwinged hawks. Unfortunately, hawks don't fly on gloomy, overcast days. Scottie and I were there primarily because the third person was a local newspaper reporter, and we did not want to miss this opportunity to educate more people about nature and hawks. Besides, hawk-watchers are eternal optimists — you never know when it might clear up.

On vacation from his job at a local chemical plant, Eugene B. Scott, better known as Scottie, was the ringleader, chief greeter, and official reporter for the hawk watch at this viewing spot. His enthusiasm and warm personality inspired us all. Local residents who used to shoot hawks on sight were drawn to marvel instead. The newspaper reporter was a nice young man, but not an outdoor person.

This spot on Clinch Mountain has been a favorite among local birders for enjoying and counting migrating hawks. These birds are primarily from New England and southern Canada. Their destination is Central America. In most years, broadwinged hawks start passing Mendota on their way south in early September, reach a crescendo by the 23rd, and then dwindle down to a few stragglers by the end of September. By the 23rd, we had usually counted close to 10,000 hawks. On a perfect day when flying conditions were optimal, 5,000 have been counted by lucky observers. Other hawk species and the infrequent osprey or eagle added variety and excitement. Results are sent to the Virginia Ornithological Society and the Hawk Watchers Association of North America so as to assist in assessment of trends in hawk populations. Hawks, near the top of the food chain, are a key element in measuring the ecological health of the continent.

As one might expect from the name, broadwinged hawks have wide, long wings. These are most efficient for soaring and diving and gliding. Hunting involves making slow circles, high in the sky, searching for prey on the ground. A quick swoop — gotcha! The hawks have also evolved a method of travel based on soaring and gliding for their long migration flights; this method needs to be as energy efficient as possible. The birds search for an updraft, or "thermal," and circle within it as they are lofted to great altitudes. Very often, hundreds of birds will be within one thermal, all boiling upward. Hawk watchers call this a "kettle." A big kettle is an exciting sight, one of nature's miracles. When birds reach the top of the thermal or when they feel they are high enough, they peel out in a long, shallow glide toward the southwest — and search for the next thermal. When it is rainy or cloudy, there are no thermals, and they just wait.

Clinch Mountain must be nearly ideal for this way of traveling. It is steep-sided and trends from northeast to southwest for miles. In clear weather, there is one thermal after another in an almost straight line. Of

course, it is a beautiful spot, even without hawks. There are broad views over the houses, pastures, and tobacco fields on both sides and up the ridgeline to Brumley Mountain above Abingdon, Virginia.

September of 1982 had not been typical. Rain, clouds, and gloom were the rule, not the exception. It had been a disappointing season for hawks and hawk watchers. Few hawks had been seen.

There the three of us sat. We explained all this to the newspaper reporter, who took copious notes. We apologized for the weather. We got started on birding tall tales. It started to drizzle. Time to go home.

Then Scottie said, "Arthur, I think I see some hawks coming."

Suddenly, they were upon us, a prodigal outpouring of hawks. The sky was full of hawks, hawks at eye level and close, hawks overhead, hawks below ridgeline, thousands of hawks. These hawks were not soaring, kettling, gliding. These hawks were flying level, straight and hard with vigorous wing strokes. These hawks were desperate. These hawks were headed south, and headed south *now,* regardless of the weather.

How do you count a sky full of hawks? You don't. You estimate as best you can. I picked out what seemed to be a sixth of the sky with some hint of boundaries where hawks were fewer.

I started counting, fast. By the time I counted to 1,000, they were gone. Our only chance at an estimate was to multiply the 1,000 by six for a total skyfull of 6,000 hawks.

After this flood of hawks, it kept drizzling, and hawks continued to stream by. We actually counted 3,182 hawks over the next few hours and reported a total for the day of 9,182. The truth may have been several thousand higher.

What happened to the 10,000 desperate hawks? Their plight was indeed serious. Not only were they behind schedule in their long journey to Central America, but their sustained vigorous flying must have seriously upset their energy budget. It is possible that few of them survived. That they made a heroic effort is clear.

I don't believe the newspaper reporter ever realized what a privilege he received that day. Our joy and excitement were simply not comprehensible to him. He wrote a very nice story, reporting the numbers, with a picture of us peering through binoculars and a great shot of a sky with specks in it.

Scottie died in 1993 after an incapacitating illness that kept him off the mountain for several years. Few hawks fly Clinch

These hawks were flying level, straight and hard with vigorous wing strokes. These hawks were desperate.

Mountain any more. We don't know why. Have they, for some mysterious reason changed their migration path? Or have they run into trouble at either their breeding grounds or their winter quarters? Ornithologists are searching for the answer. Still, when I stare at the empty skies on a bright September day, my disappointment and sadness are tempered by the memory of that day the hawks flew. I close my eyes and see them streaming by with bold wing strokes.

Arthur Smith is a retired chemical engineer living in Kingsport, Tenn. He is a devoted nature lover and is active in several environmental organizations.

Rhinoceroses

(Knoxville Zoo)

Sand-colored, at first you don't see them,
but then, "Oh my God!" something as big as my Honda
is nursing beside something the size
of a fuel truck. But they're alive!

My God! As big as my Honda.
Sand-sculpture wakes into moving shapes.
They're alive!
Do a slow-motion dance.

Sand-sculpture wakes into moving shapes.
Anne Bradstreet praised the Lord as a teat,
Do a slow-motion dance.
Here's proof she knew whereof she spoke.

Nursing at something the size of a fuel truck,
Sand-colored, at first you don't see them.

— Marilyn Kallet

Marilyn Kallet is director of Creative Writing and professor of English at University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Her poetry has been published in many national magazines, including New Letters, Greensboro Review, Carolina Quarterly, *and* Denver Quarterly.

Reviews

Lost & Found
by Jeff Daniel Marion
The Sow's Ear Press
Abingdon, Va. - 1994
$9.95 (paperback)

Of course, a book of poems called *Lost & Found* has already announced one of its major themes: the retrieval of important pieces of past life by force of memory and — in this case — the grace of poetry. But this lovely collection, Jeff Daniel Marion's best, also broaches and develops other themes: the tenacious tenuousness of human existence, the necessity for emotional communication, the relentlessness of the passing years, the deep obscure solace of a local landscape.

But let me hasten away from these musty abstractions. The themes of poetry are general, never the property of a single voice or temperament. It is the specific articulation that draws us — vital, breathing, indelible. "Dogwood Blossoms" dramatizes in concentrated form the rescue of past beauty from the pressures of ravening present time. In this poem, a cook at Lackey's Cafe abandons his hot grill for a moment to get a breath of the fresh outdoors. He spots a blooming dogwood across the street, and this image transports him in memory to a mountain fishing cabin of long ago:

> What drifts to him now
> is the smell and sizzle of those
>
> trout frying between two strips of bacon
> and the pine-panelled room
> with an oil lamp where later
>
> he'd read and settle back
> to listen to the stream
> and be swept away on its dark
> currents.

His memory recovers not a highly charged incident but simply a moment of reflection, of meditation, of peaceful acceptance that stands in stark contrast to his too-busy present-day life. But there is an ominous ambiguity in the final phrase; the "dark currents" of time have carried him to his present situation and will bear him away from it into a deeper darkness.

The past, then, is contained within the present and is discoverable. Any part of time we call a single moment has a double nature: the past that is inside it, nestled there unchangeable, and also the tumult of contemporary change. In "Farm Scene, 1918," Marion insists on this double nature of the single moment. The poem is a study of an old photograph that shows a boy with his father and a cousin ranged beside a Model T Ford truck. The truck stands as a symbol of the violent changes that have overtaken our century: "now piston / thrust into a future past these crackling / parched cornfields, hauling harvest down hard- / baked clay roads of East Tennessee toward a day / of blue snow seventy-two years later. . . ."

Syntax demands that we read "past" as a preposition ("past these . . . cornfields"), but the theme of the poem causes us to read it also as a noun modified by an adjective: *future past.* The advent of the machine has fused past and future together, so that in the same instant that the three-year-old has tucked his hand into his overalls, he has also had them tucked across his chest in his coffin: ". . . a day / of blue snow seventy-two years later but quick / as the engine's spark when the once-overalled-boy's hands / tuck across his chest lapped in satin and he is lowered / into the frozen ground where his own son now / stands above him, his breath throbbing: / O Father."

"Farm Scene, 1918" is a remarkable poem, a little tour de force by a poet who usually eschews any splashy effect, dedicating his vision to the immediate, the local, the image that is true whether it carries great resonance or not.

But in *Lost & Found,* Marion seems to be spreading out a bit. For instance, there are at least nine poems here spoken by a persona called "The Chinese Poet." Contemporary poets often invent personae to utter a series of poems that embody a certain slant of thought; we remember, for example, Jim Wayne Miller's Brier and a largish crew of the other kinfolk of W. B. Yeats' Crazy Jane.

Marion's Chinese Poet is no more Chinese than fortune cookies — which originated, I am told, in Brooklyn. In one poem, we find him fishing a trout stream in Southwest Virginia with his old friend Brier, a pretty far piece from the Yalu with its golden carp. But the figure of this poet sets a tone that Marion desires and finds necessary for the design of his book. It is a voice calm, melancholy though content, elegiac, observant, understated, sly, gently humorous, and as quiet as an elm tree dismissing its first leaf of autumn. Use of this voice also admits a range of traditional Chinese symbols that are already in play naturally in Marion's East Tennessee landscape: the mount that symbolizes the eternity of nature, the mist that by turns obscures and reveals this eternity, the water that reflects the image of humankind while simultaneously expressing its transitoriness.

One of Marion's very best poems is spoken by The Chinese Poet. Just as "Farm Scene, 1918" enjambs two widely separated moments of time to form a single image, so "The Egrets" coalesces, by means of allusion, a Chinese and an Appalachian landscape, an Appalachian and a Chinese poetic mode. The result is not some weird-looking hybrid, some pictogram-bespattered page, but a poem about desire for transcendental experience more reminiscent of "The Wild Swans at Coole" than of any Confucian Canto:

> October's first cold snap
> and the egrets are gone.
> All day I have thought
>
> Of them, high on the blue
> thermals, white sails luffing
> south towards a faraway
> savannah
>
> Along the old river road
> this summer the sight
> of them lifted me.
>
> I yearned to stroke
> their downy plumes and
> long arching necks.
>
> But they were beyond me,
> measures of grace
> held by this quiet
>
> pool where reflection
> is water's wavering
> memory, a dream
>
> too soon dissolved,
> rising on snowy wings.

Marion does not play at being Li Po; his method is gently ironic. The Chinese Poet and the Appalachian Poet are not identical, but they are consonant in their sympathies and alike in their admiration for reticence, quietude, and reverence.

The point is not identification but con-

nection, and such connection — by association, by remembrance, by physical binding, by naming — is a major preoccupation of *Lost and Found.* It is interesting to note how many times the word *line* is employed. I listed nine usages in 54 pages, and I've probably missed some. There are lines found in hands, outlines of objects, fishing lines, and lines of poetry, but in every case, they bind one thing to another like the lines of the spiderweb inside the terrapin shell; they are all lines of communication.

The most overt — and maybe the most moving — instance is in "The Chinese Poet Writes a Letter to His Friends Who Missed Him in the Public Places Where They Thought He Should Be." The poem tells us that the poet has slipped away to go fishing rather than showing up at ceremonies where he was expected. The identification of fishing line with the poetic line occurs in the last two stanzas: "for I have followed this path / to cast my lines out and out, / their looping arch like letters / written above the water, / an endless parabola / of delight."

Fishing and poetry are solitary occupations. Yet in mystical fashion, they are communal activities too; the poet's parables communicate with the larger world in just the same tentative, hopeful way the fisherman's line communicates with the world of nature. A gap is bridged, though such bridging may not have been the primary purpose of either solitary pursuit.

This idea is presented more fully in "Choptack," a poem that takes the form of a local legend explaining the place name that comprises its title. A certain mountain ridge bears this name because valley settlers heard the woodsman up there as he cut logs to build his cabin. They never knew him, never even saw him, but they understood his purposes, his desires, his dreams, his mind and soul; the sound he made defined both the place where he lived and the one below, where they lived:

> it was the heart's own
>
> music,
> that *chop*
> and lonely echo
>
> drifting down
> the mountainside
> *tack*
>
> *tack.*

This then is the Appalachian Poet: He works alone in his mountains, he minds his own business and dodges official notice, he concentrates on the task at hand. The difference he makes in the world — a real and irreplaceable difference — is simply a by-product of what he is and what he does, what he would be and do whether anyone ever paid attention or not.

— Fred Chappell

Fred Chappell teaches at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the author of many poetry books and novels. He comes from western North Carolina which provides the setting for much of his work.

Mountains of the Heart
by Scott Weidensaul
Fulcrum Publishing
Golden, Colo. - 1994
$21.95 (paperback)

Scott Weidensaul's *Mountains of the Heart* reminds me of Maurice Brooks' *The Appalachians,* a book which I first read in the 1960s. Brooks' work awoke me at age 15 and prompted me to begin to chronicle what I witnessed in nature, particularly the nesting of small birds such as Carolina wrens and yellow throats. Weidensaul's exploration of the Appalachian Mountains, from Cheaha Mountain in Alabama to Belle Island off Newfoundland, has also awakened me, making me want to journey to many of the places he describes so superbly.

In *Mountains of the Heart,* you will find an intense look into hills, leaves, stones, cold trout streams, bogs, cliffs, and bear dens. Weidensaul describes his journeys with an honesty that fits the land he's exploring. Whether he's talking about a wounded place, a dead river, abandoned mines, an ice age time, or dark, hidden old growth spruce woods, he talks honestly — contrasting our lives, our scarcities, and abundances with the long run of time itself, a span of time embodied by these mountains.

He shares what he learns of the length and breadth and depth of time quite well. He writes about the many great changes that have come to the land in recent times. These sweeping events include, for example, the chestnut blight, the dying firs in the Smokies, and the gypsy moth invasion, as well as the miraculous return of forests to mountains denuded at the turn of the century and the subsequent recovery of species such as the black bear and the raven. Weidensaul shares his sense of the great losses:

> There are many things I mourn, living in this latter, lesser day. I mourn the loss of the mighty forest. . . . I wish in vain for a wolf's cry on a midwinter's night. . . . But most of all, perhaps, I grieve that I will never see [passenger] pigeons. I have sat with closed eyes and tried, straining my imagination, to rebuild in my mind the multitudes that gathered the sky to themselves and blew a wind beneath their assembled wings like the roar of a storm. But it cannot be. Some things we lose but we still remember; others pass away into a limbo that defies recall. The pigeon is in this farthest recess, reduced to quiet words on a page, growing fainter with the years.

His skill as a writer invites you straight into his explorations: "I found a ghost today, flowering in the woods," for example, is a fine rendition in words for what the American chestnut has become.

Weidensaul grew up in the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania, so he has witnessed a torn land. In this book, he testifies about loss and environmental degradation as any realist must, yet he embarks on his journey with idealism and a simple need to share the beauty he finds: a fossil fern in a piece of shale along a creek, the alluring autumn forests, the intricacy of lichen on a spruce limb.

Scott Weidensaul is an avid explorer with a wonderful talent for blending a love of science with a joy in language and place. He really does see the forest for the trees, and he certainly sees these mountains in their exquisite diversity.

— Clyde Kessler

Clyde Kessler teaches English at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va. Summers, he works for the U.S. Forest Service studying the nesting status of migratory birds in the Virginia and West Virginia highlands.

Reviews

Whistle Over the Mountain:
Timber, Track, & Trails in the Tennessee Smokies
by Ronald G. Schmidt and William S. Hooks

Graphicom Press
Yellow Springs, Ohio - 1994
$22.50 (paperback)

Unlike most guides to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park that emphasize scenery, vegetation, or pioneers, this book turns to the history recorded on the land by intensive logging operations. *Whistle Over the Mountain* shows readers how to look for scars left by railroads, steam-powered skidders, and a large lumber mill. Bill Hooks, a railroad aficionado who spent 30 years collecting oral histories, photographs, and logging records, teamed up with writer Ron Schmidt to register in painstaking detail the location of the Little River Lumber Company operations in Townsend, Tenn., and in what is today the national park.

Formerly Tuckaleechee Cove, the town received its name from Wilson B. Townsend, a timber baron from Pennsylvania who extended the railroad through the area in 1901. Townsend bought out smaller mills and purchased 80,000 acres of mostly old growth forest at about $2 per acre. By 1913, Little River Lumber Company's two band sawmills cut 90,000 board feet per day and continued operating until 1939 — well after the park was established. Although the mill was demolished in 1941, Schmidt and Hooks use maps and old photographs to show where it stood and which buildings from the period still remain.

A piercing blast from the mill's steam whistle told employees when to wake, when to go to work, and when to go home for dinner — this symbol of modernity also serves as the title for the book. Hook's interviews, as well as those by journalist Vic Weals, provide excellent documentation of how technology affected people's lives. Individual voices are contained in separate "sidebars." Interspersing more direct quotes throughout the main text would have enhanced the writing, but most readers probably will study the book in sections rather than reading it end-to-end as I did.

After chronicling the history of the company, the authors turn geographically to each spur of the Little River. With evocative sketches, photographs, and documents, they describe the extent of logging at each location. History is truly beneath our feet, they remind the reader, as they explain how to detect evidence of an old railroad bed or train wreck. Historical imagination is also required of the reader. For example, the authors note that along the West Fork of the Little River, the landscape must have dictated a "myriad of bridges and trestles [to rail line builders]," and the reader must envision what the mountain stream looked like with so much construction on it.

This book does a great job of making detailed, primary-source history accessible to a nonacademic reader. For the technologically illiterate, it describes the difference between narrow gauge and standard gauge tracks, rod engines, and geared engines. For accessibility, the authors scorned footnotes, but a few well-chosen endnotes might have made it clear how they developed certain interpretations. Which local people remember W. B. Townsend's "kindness, compassion, strength and discipline?" How and why did the residents of Miller's Cove resist Townsend's attempt to buy a right-of-way through their land? "Mass production left behind mass destruction," the authors conclude, as extractive industries like Little River laid waste the environment. Yet there is not much evidence of this in the book. More photographs of the cleared landscape or fires or flood and a few quotes describing the devastation would have moderated the romantic association people so often make with trains.

I strongly recommend this book to anyone who regularly visits the Tennessee side of the park; the great detail also makes it useful to scholars of logging history. It will no doubt serve as a companion to the fine Little River Lumber Railroad and Lumber Company Museum in Townsend. *Whistle Over the Mountain* gives us a window onto the life of people engaged in early twentieth century logging operations. By witnessing the traces left by Little River Lumber Company, we can appreciate how dramatically the forest has changed.

— Margaret Lynn Brown

Margaret Lynn Brown, a doctoral candidate at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, Ky., is currently finishing Smoky Mountain Story: A Chronicle of Twentieth Century Environmental Change.

J. Murphy, Jr. / National Park Service Archives, Vance

Loading logs on the Little River.

Selu:
Seeking the Corn-Mother's Wisdom
by Marilou Awiakta

Fulcrum Publishing
Golden, Colo. - 1993
$14.95 (paperback)
$19.95 (hardback)

Only in this last decade of the 20th century has the importance of biological diversity to ecosystem health been finally acknowledged in law and acted upon. And perhaps the greatest breakthrough in the first decade of the 21st century will be the general recognition among United States policy makers of the importance of gender equality and ethnic diversity to the development of effective solutions to society's problems. When gender and ethnic diversity finally arrive, those able to walk through the newly opened doors will be in debt to leaders like Marilou Awiakta who predicts:

> Not only are racism, sexism and disdain for Mother Earth coming to harvest in the 1990s, they also seem to be reseeding themselves. Thoughts and energy to counter them are also coming to harvest and, hopefully, will reseed in an even stronger strain, so that the twenty-first century will begin a new era of peace and justice. I dream this not because I am a romantic, but because I come from survivor people who revere the sacred law.

Selu: Seeking the Corn-Mother's Wisdom is a treasure chest of thoughtful prose and 35 insightful poems written by Marilou Awiakta. If widely distributed and read, Ms. Awiakta's book may do for the ethnic diversity and gender equality movements what Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* did for the environmental movement 33 years ago: give its missionaries a common text chock full of moving examples and lessons from which to preach the gender/ethnic equality gospel.

A Cherokee/Appalachian writer and storyteller whose family has lived in the Southern Appalachian mountains for seven generations, Ms. Awiakta grew up in the high-tech world of Oak Ridge when the atom bomb was under development there. Now a resident of Memphis, she translates the ancient wisdom of our continent's indigenous peoples for us into the vocabulary and idiom of America today.

Who is "Selu"? Pronounced by the Cherokee "Say-loo," she is in Cherokee tradition the mother of us all and spokesperson for the Creator. Says a Cherokee medicine man: "In the beginning, the Creator made our Mother Earth. Then came Selu, Grandmother Corn." Awiakta explains:

> For thousands of years, indigenous peoples of the Americas have formally recognized corn as a teacher of wisdom, the spirit inseparable from the grain. Through corn's natural ways of growing and being, the spirit sings of strength, respect, balance, harmony. Of adaptability, cooperation, unity in diversity. Songs of survival . . . Grandmother Selu [teaches that] if you take [from Mother Earth], you have to give back respect and thankfulness.

Strengthening the political hand of women and minorities will increase the clout of the environmental movement as well. Women, with their innate attitude of respect for nature (in contrast to men's generally utilitarian mentality), always have provided much of the backbone for wildlife and other natural resources protection campaigns. Women formed the bulk of the grass-roots volunteer organizers, telephone callers, and letter writers who have risen as needed to help save key remnants of our natural and cultural heritage. Notes Awiakta:

> The linear, Western masculine mode of thought has been too intent on conquering nature to learn from her a basic truth: To separate the gender that bears life from the power to sustain it is as destructive as to tempt nature itself. . . . Such linear, polar thinking generates so much anger on both sides that there is no consensual climate where reasonable solutions can be found. The center cannot hold. And the beast of catastrophe slouches toward us. We need a network of the committed to ward it off. Women at large can use our traditional intercessory skills to create this network through organizations, through education, and through weaving together conscientious protagonists in industry, science and government.

Note the respect accorded *all* viewpoints and the image of a strong basket woven of different materials.

North America's first peoples — unlike those of us with European forebears — traditionally have been taught to consider themselves one with nature, with a sacred tie to Mother Earth. Severance of this tie, observes Awiakta, is basic to Western thought. The result: "The attitude of use and consume . . . render[s] the web of life at a brutal rate."

Selu is uniquely stimulating. The poems and essays contained in this volume touched me as no other book has in years. I commend it to all interested in a grass-roots based movement to protect the quality of human life based on a reverence for life. *Selu* should serve as a point of departure for renewed efforts in communities and capitals everywhere to avert the irreversible downward spiraling in the nature-based quality of our lives.

—M. Rupert Cutler

Rupert Cutler is executive director of Virginia's Explore Park, a natural and living history park near the Blue Ridge Parkway in Roanoke and Bedford counties, Va. He is also an adjunct professor of wildlife and fisheries science at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Oakseeds:
Stories from the Land
by Gary W. Cook
illustrated by Jenna Cagle

The University of Tennessee Press
Knoxville, Tenn. - 1993
$26.95 (hardback), $17.95 (paper)

As part of its celebration of Tennessee's bicentennial in 1996, the University of Tennessee Press is offering the Outdoor Tennessee Series, intended to emphasize environmental awareness and conservation. As one of the books in that series, *Oakseeds* is unabashedly Tennessean in nature, at least "Tennessean" as that term is understood by the author Gary Cook.

In his preface, Cook suggests that gen-

erations of Tennesseans have bonded with the land and have maintained this bonding through bloodlines. They have learned their values and faith from their forefathers who have passed on a land ethic, what he calls "land-bonds," that has strengthened families and brought its members together "with united values." And so he launches his attempt to "fairly represent" the spirits of the "many honorable Tennesseans" he has known.

One of his stories, "Interview," involves a writer from Atlanta who comes to Tennessee to interview Matthew Hills, famous for having killed many record-book whitetail deer. Hills gives his "message" to those who will read the interview: "If you are a sincere hunter who consistently takes deer, regardless of the size, and your kills are clean, then you are a good hunter, and you should be proud."

In many ways, this statement represents what this book is all about. It is not so much a book about environmental awareness or even about the land itself. It is a book for the sportsman, particularly the hunter, and for those who desire to indulge themselves in self-congratulatory, romanticized notions of the Tennessean.

In this book, the Tennessean is a larger-than-life figure who knows how to live and how to show outsiders what real good life is all about. There is a continuous thread of Tennessee pride running through these stories, but the problem is that it is heavy-handed, too often creating characters who are John Wayne-type clones. They are characterized by a kind of bravado, men who are so sure of themselves and their values that they often oversimplify situations and take it upon themselves to right the wrongs of the world — or at least to show that they are the true ones who know how to handle situations because of their natural woodsmen training and inculcated value system.

For example, in "Uprooted," John Bible reluctantly travels to Illinois where there are "fast-talking Northerners," and he encounters ruffians who pick on his "hick Tennessee talk." He responds first by punching one of them out and then by outshooting them on the archery range. And so it goes, in varied forms, throughout the book.

The stories, while undoubtedly sincere, lack depth. They are fraught with similar stereotypical characters, settings, and situations, and they are full of sentimental, happy endings, often forced upon the story without clear antecedents. The stories do pay lip service to some ideas about conservation and about a respect for the land. However, mostly there is a sort of Tennessee utopia celebrated in these stories. The collection lacks realistic vision and wears thin upon the reader who does not so easily buy into Cook's brand of the Tennessee myth.

— Ernest Lee

Ernest Lee is Professor of Creative Writing at the Tennessee Governor's School for the Humanities and Associate Professor of English at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., where he teaches courses in British literature, environmental writers, and composition.

Hiking Trails of the Smokies

edited by Don DeFoe, Beth Giddens, and Steve Kemp

Smoky Mountains Historical Society
Gatlinburg, Tenn. - 1994
$16.95 (paperback)

Hiking Trails of the Smokies provides a fresh look at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and its trail system. According to the publishers, the book's purpose is to provide the hiker with detailed descriptions of each trail as well as to emphasize the natural and cultural resources of the mountains. *Hiking Trails of the Smokies* delivers this and more.

Trails meets the needs of both the novice and the experienced hiker. Whether you're planning a day hike or an extended trip into the backcountry, the introduction provides pertinent information about park regulations, medical concerns, environmental ethics, weather, and equipment.

The bulk of the book concerns itself with the 168 individual trails maintained by the National Park Service. The trails, along with accompanying narratives, are arranged in alphabetical order for easy access. The narratives, compiled by 15 noted "hiker/writers" are wonderfully written and provide detailed descriptions of the trail as well as natural, cultural, and historical points of interest. Would you like to know how Charlie's Bunion got its name, or what part Alum Cave Bluffs played in the Civil War?

This is what sets this guide apart from others of its kind. Its simple prose style is general enough to appeal to the layman, yet specific enough on biological, botanical, geographical, and geological matters to capture the attention of experts.

One of the more refreshing and unique aspects of the narratives, compared to other trail guides I've seen, is the trail profile map which is basically a graph illustrating the trail's elevation in feet and distance in miles. This outstanding feature rewards the prospective hiker with a visual understanding of the trail's topography. Another highlight is a map key featuring coordinates that can be found on the all-trail map which accompanies the book, as well as coordinates corresponding to the United States Geological Survey quad maps.

Hiking Trails of the Smokies features a list of the park's busiest trails, trails grouped according to area, and a trail index. Small enough to fit snugly into the back pocket of a pair of jeans, durable enough to withstand the wear and tear of extensive use, and informative enough to save a life — this little book will make a worthwhile companion for anyone interested in enjoying the wilderness of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

— Eric Graves

Eric Graves, an experienced hiker, is an English major at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn.

Oak Ridge National Laboratory:

The First Fifty Years

by Leland Johnson and Daniel Schaffer

University of Tennessee Press
Knoxville, Tenn. - 1994
$30.00 (hardback)
$15.00 (paperback)

Even for someone who grew up in Oak Ridge in the 1940s and 1950s and has lived within view of the tower shielding facility reactor since 1963, Leland Johnson and Daniel Schaffer's *Oak Ridge National Laboratory: The First Fifty Years* provides new information and

background facts that more than repay the time spent reading the book.

More than a mere recounting of buildings and high technology, the story of ORNL is a story of people: the European scientists who came to the United States fleeing fascism, as well as the men who directed the laboratory and who fought for its survival through governmental and societal changes. This concentration on the human aspects of ORNL's history is one of the real strengths of the book.

Johnson and Schaffer unravel the thread of ORNL's history, moving from site selection (and the impact on rural Appalachia) to the lab's present stage as a multiprogram facility with global outreach including partnerships with industries and universities. The authors discuss environmental concerns, including an attempt in the early 1970s to solve the problem of high-level radioactive wastes by burying them in deep salt mines in Kansas, a solution that was finally rejected. The debate over radioactive waste disposal continues today.

The book also traces ORNL's environmental studies programs, beginning with early ones on the effects of radioactive fallout on ecological systems, culminating in the 1980s with about a quarter of the lab's programs concentrated in environmental and health fields.

Numerous photographs (63 in all), the employment of metaphor to explain difficult concepts, and the use of subheads within chapters help to make the book one the layman can enjoy.

— Connie Jordan Green

Connie Jordan Green teaches composition and creative writing at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and is the author of two novels for young people, The War at Home *and* Emmy.

Ready for Harvest: *Clearcutting in the Southern Appalachians*

a video directed by Anne Lewis Johnson

produced by Appalshop Films
Whitesburg, Ky. - 1993
$150 VHS Format

It depends on your point of view — one person's forest primeval is another's pulpstand.

Ready for Harvest examines these disparate views by presenting a case study of clearcutting as it is practiced in the southern mountains. Clearcutting is a tree harvesting method that cuts an entire stand, regardless of species or maturity. This method is both highly efficient and highly lucrative for the commercial loggers who harvest trees growing on public lands. It is also fiercely opposed by grass-roots groups who oppose clearcutting as an aesthetic and environmental disaster.

This video presents both sides of the issue through interviews with logging company managers and officials in the U.S. Forest service, as well as the owner-manager of a small woodlot and members of the Western North Carolina Alliance, an Asheville, N.C.,-based citizens' organization which has worked on forest management issues for the last 12 years.

Using classic Appalshop techniques, *Ready for Harvest* communicates a lot of information quickly without sacrificing visual quality or viewer interest. It also introduces many of the wider issues inherent in the specific controversy over clearcutting: the political processes at work behind public policy decisions, the clash between professional and popular opinions about the use of natural resources, and the economics of resource utilization.

Also like other Appalshop films, *Ready for Harvest* takes a position. Woodlot owner and sawmill operator Walton Smith makes a strong case for selective harvesting, while ecologist Mary Kelly promotes the natural diversity of native forests that includes noncommercial species. Other interviews articulate the cultural, spiritual, and aesthetic values of naturally wooded mountains. The insights of those opposed to clearcutting make it hard to accept the "use-it-or-lose-it" pragmatism of the U.S. Forest Service.

The video's tight editing causes it to miss some important points; for example, a close examination of the economics of clearcutting versus selective harvesting. What impact does each have on local economies and employment? Appalshop's tight budgeting also precludes a comparative look at the issue; other North American regions are wrestling with the problems surrounding clearcutting. How are grass-roots groups in Canada, for example, dealing with the same issue?

Overall, *Ready for Harvest* is a fine addition to the well-crafted studies of regional concerns produced by the cinematographers in Whitesburg, Ky. It leaves the viewer not only more knowledgeable about the effects of clearcutting, but also with a clear point of view with which to either agree or disagree about the intrinsic value of national forests, well beyond their commercial function as mere wood factories.

— Phillip Obermiller

Phillip J. Obermiller is an associate of the Appalachian Center at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, Ky. He is co-editor of two recent volumes, From Mountain to Metropolis *and* Appalachia in an International Context.

"However destructive may be the policies of the government and the methods and products of the corporations, the root of the problem is always to be found in private life. We must learn to see that every problem that concerns us as conservationists always leads straight to the question of how we live. The world is being destroyed, no doubt about it, by the greed of the rich and powerful. It is also being destroyed by popular demand. . . . If conservation is to have a hope of succeeding, then conservationists, while continuing their effort to change public life, are going to have to begin the effort to change private life as well."

— Wendell Berry, "Conservation is Good Work," in *Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community (1992, 1993)*

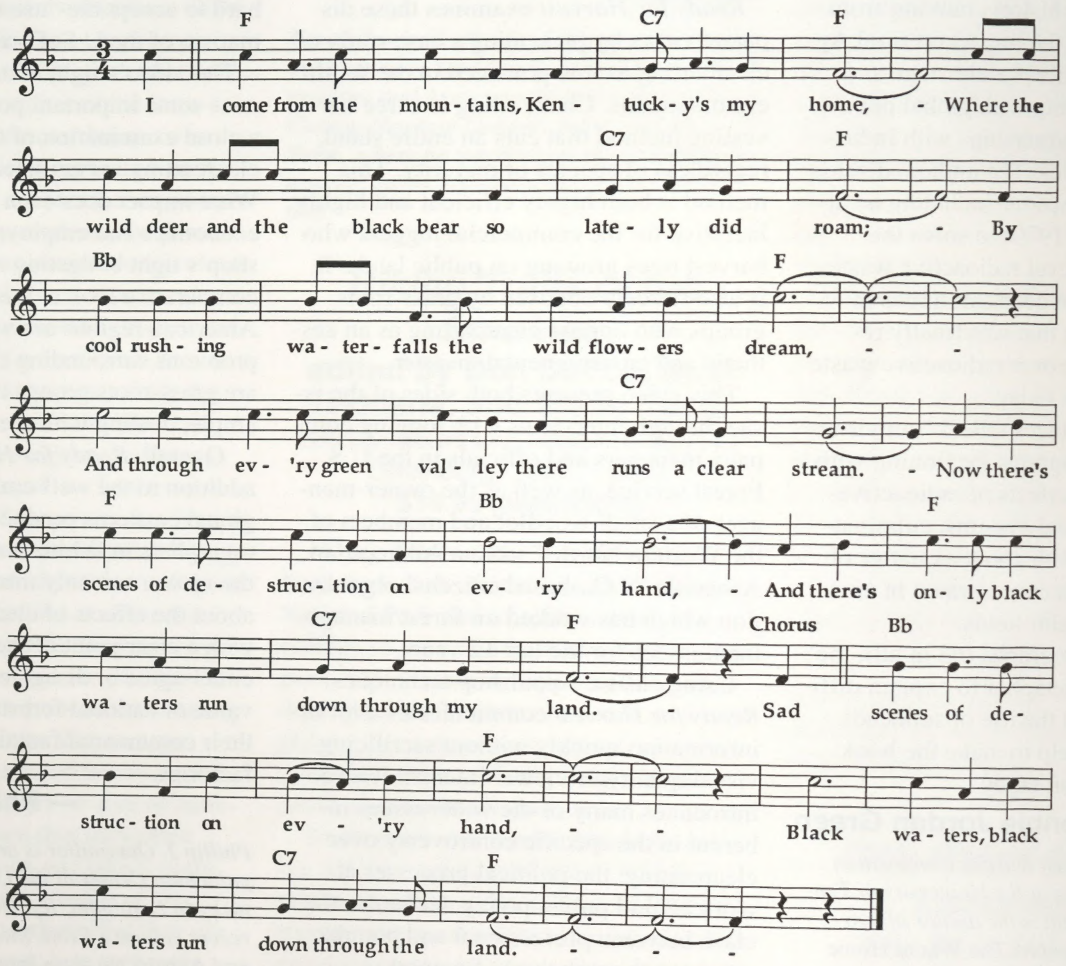
"Black Water" is a great song written by Jean Ritchie. She recorded it on *None But One* (Greenhays Records). Several singers have recorded "Black Water," most notably Jody Stecher's recording for Bay Records in the late 1970s.

Jean says: "I began thinking about this song in the early 1960s shortly after strip-mining operations began on our mountain land in Viper, Ky. Like many other landowners there, my Grandpa Hall had sold his mineral rights in those very early days by signing a deed; he later claimed that the deed he had been given had somehow been switched to the more comprehensive broadform one which listed all minerals below the surface, present and future, in addition to coal. Underground mines were all that were foreseen at that time. He was paid fifty cents an acre. I didn't know about all this when the stripping began on our mountaintop and the first "black waters" began to run down and pollute the clear stream of our hollow. It was just a great sadness to see the stream die: minnows, crawdads, water snakes, all disappeared and when the branch wasn't running black, rusty, or red, it was silted and slimy with algae. It was as though a dear friend had died."

— Ed Snodderly

Jean Ritchie

Black Waters


F C7 F
I come from the moun - tains, Ken - tuck - y's my home, - Where the
C7 F
wild deer and the black bear so late - ly did roam; - By
Bb F
cool rush - ing wa - ter - falls the wild flow - ers dream, - -
C7
And through ev - 'ry green val - ley there runs a clear stream. - Now there's
F Bb F
scenes of de - struc - tion on ev - 'ry hand, - And there's on - ly black
C7 F Chorus Bb
wa - ters run down through my land. - Sad scenes of de -
F
struc - tion on ev - 'ry hand, - - Black wa - ters, black
C7 F
wa - ters run down through the land. - - -

2) O the quail, she's a pretty bird, she sings a sweet tongue;
In the roots of tall timbers she nests with her young.
But the hillside explodes with the dynamite's roar,
And the voices of the small birds will sound there no more;
And the hillsides come a-sliding so awful and grand,
And the flooding black waters rise over my land.

Chorus: Sad scenes of destruction on every hand;
Black waters, black waters run down through the land.

3) In the rising of the springtime we planted our corn,
In the ending of the springtime we buried a son,
In summer come a nice man, said, "Everything's fine —
My employer just requires a way to his mine" —
Then they threw down my mountain and covered my corn,[1]
And the grave on the hillside's a mile deeper down,[2]
And the man stands and talks with his hat in his hand
As the poisonous water spreads over my land.

Chorus: Sad scenes of destruction on every hand;
Black waters, black waters run down through the land.

4) Well, I ain't got no money and not much of a home;
I own my own land, but my land's not my own.
But if I had ten million — somewheres thereabouts —
I'd buy Perry County and I'd run 'em all out!
Set down on the bank with my bait in my can,
And just watch the clear waters run down through my land!

Chorus:
Well wouldn't that be like the old Promised Land?
Black water, black waters no more in my land!

[1] Extra line: use music in line 5-6 above, starting with "And there's . . ."
[2] Extra line: use music in line 4-5 above, starting with "Now there's . . ."

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The only line on the parchment my tongue was,
What is it like to be married to a rapist?
The main question was for me, however,
for how could I have lived or matched my loneliness
had Jack taken the woods away from me?

Who is that in these woods?
I do not know.

Once a hunter stepped through the woods,
and not recognizing him,
I stood behind a tree as he passed a few feet away.
In the woods, I can be invisible, nakedness taken for granted,
or every birch leaf can become a superstitious cat's eye.

Oh, Chestnut stump, what would you have us say for you?
What Indian maiden wept into your roots?
What molecule of which tear lingered
in one of your farthest leaf reaches toward air?
Did every opossum that traversed her young
like kinged checkers on her back look the same,
maintaining the same hopes and dreams?
Now that some careless settler has cut out your tongue,
let me choke of your heart for strength.
Give me the words
so that I may scratch the bark of bitterness.
Or how can the rain reach the woods?
Rain is overwhelming if measured by the drops of days
and certainly its generosity cannot reach everywhere.
I am always surprised by getting wet
under the umbrella of ancient oak.
Woods and rain seem improbable together,
and yet I have known them both to the bone of my soul.

You do not really know me
until we have jumped the creeks
or torn our hands climbing small rock outcroppings together.
You do not know yourself
until you know the woods.
We cannot know one another
until we have lived separately
in the woods and met years later.
Then, maybe, we shall have an understanding.

We leap out from the darknesses.
We are of color and drama and truth.
We wander in and out of the light.
We die in heaps.
We take place in the woods
before giving ourselves back to the uses of the world.
The smell overcomes you and how can you decide
which is better, the smell of woods or that of a man?
In the woods, in the woods, there is a whisper
and you forget that there are spiders
rattling the smell of oak leaves that press your ears as you lay down
and the whisper comes back to you
for everything speaks as itself here in its native tongue.
It comes back among the curling syllables of dried maple leaves.
It comes back for it is what you have offered the world.
A faint whisper lightly stroking the silences of brown
is what you get back,
the shadow of the echo.

— Hilda Downer

Hilda Downer is a poet from Sugar Grove, N.C.

East Tennessee State University is one of 46 institutions in the Tennessee Board of Regents system, the seventh largest system of higher education in the nation. The Tennessee Board of Regents is the governing board for this system which is comprised of six universities, 14 community colleges, and 26 area technology centers. The TBR system enrolls 80 percent of all Tennessee students attending public institutions of higher education.

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KENNETH MURRAY

CATAWBA RHODODENDRON
blooms in North Carolina with Mt. Mitchell in the background. Mt. Mitchell, the tallest mountain east of the Mississippi, was scaled by D. R. Beeson, Sr. and C. Hodge Mathes in 1915. For an excerpt of Beeson's journal of a strenuous 1914 hike across the Smokies, see page seven of this issue. His Mt. Mitchell journal will be published by Panther Press this May.

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